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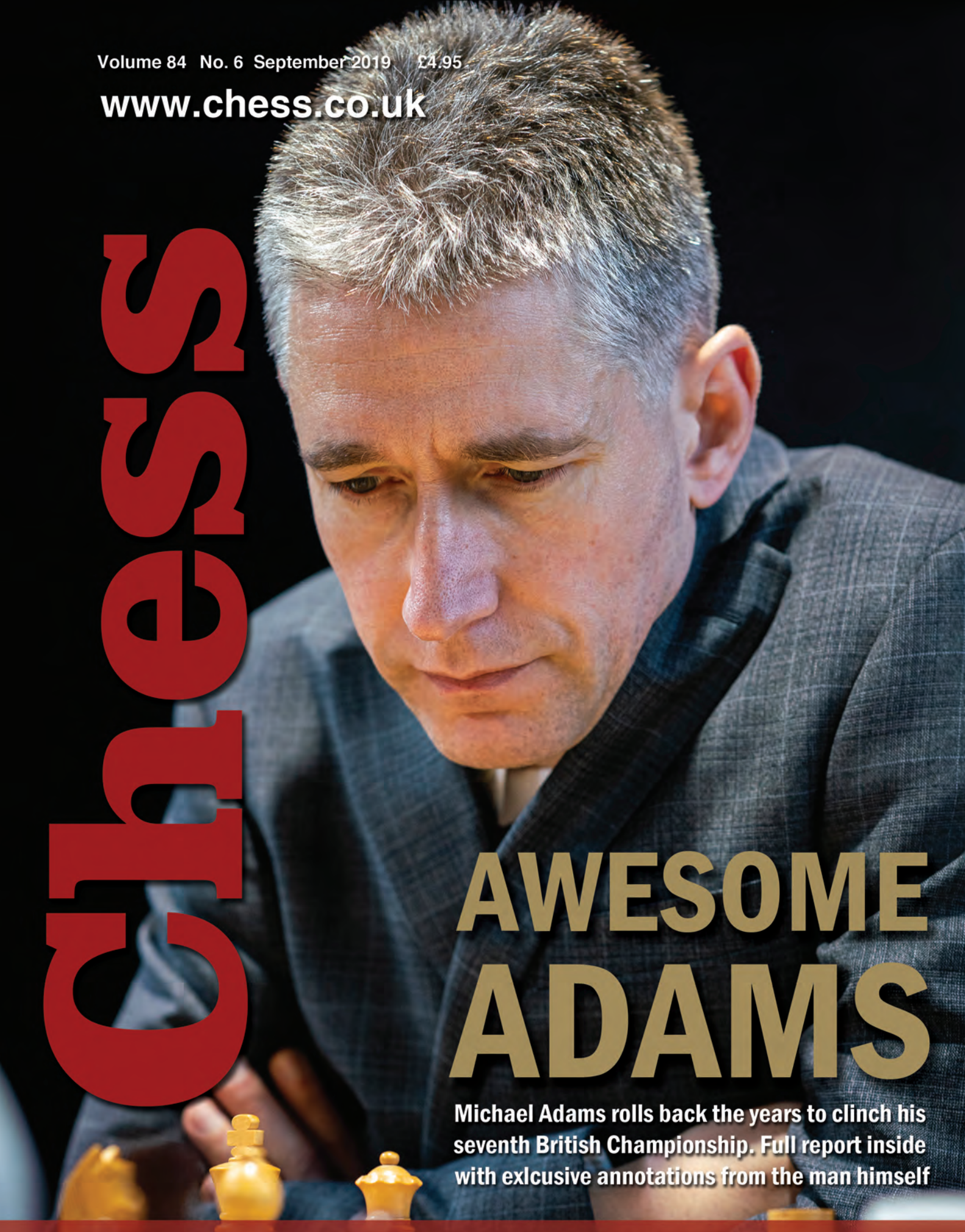


AWESOME ADAMS

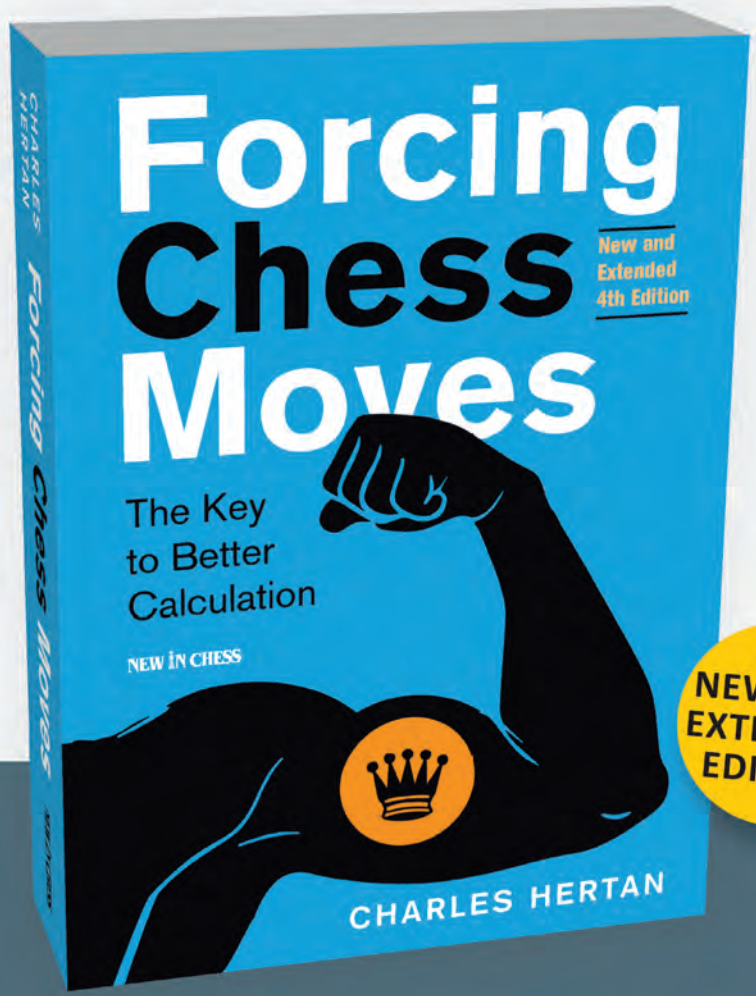
Michael Adams rolls back the years to clinch his seventh British Championship. Full report inside with exlcusive annotations from the man himself

ISSN 0964-6221

- Best of British - Terry Chapman reports from the British Over-50 Championship
- Gelfand's Comeback - Yochanan Afek reports on Boris's triumph at Netanya
- All the Wrong Moves - Stephen Moss reviews Sasha Chapin's rollicking new book

VISIT…

Why is it that the human brain so often refuses to consider winning chess tactics?



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Chess Editorial

By Executive Editor, IM Malcolm Pein **@TelegraphChess**

As I write, Vishy Anand led after the first round of the Sinquefield Cup, as Ian Nepomniachtchi cracked in the sixth hour of play. The 15th world champion will turn 50 just after this year's London Chess Classic, yet remains one of the great forces in world chess. Here in the UK, Michael Adams at 46 still seems like the class act even as our top five players (Adams, David Howell, Gawain Jones, Luke McShane and Matthew Sadler) coalesce around 2700, with their rating order changing nearly every game.

This year's British Championships lacked a commercial sponsor, but Adams came to defend the title he won so imperiously at Hull last year and looked in a different class. While his main rivals struggled at times, Mickey was just too strong in his key games and good value for his winning score of 7½/9. and seventh British title. David Howell took second with 7/9 and our Editor shared third with Ravi Haria on 6½/9.

Richard played very well when he had the chance and should have beaten Howell. He had a couple of days off when both Keith Arkell and Nick Pert were unable to come to the board, and thanks to that the magazine is appearing on time!

There were four female players in the field and it was particularly pleasing to see Jovanka Houska playing so well and arguably in some of her best ever form, as she won her ninth British Women's title, while the newest recruit to the England Women's team, Katarzyna Toma, had a great tournament, defeating GMs Chris Ward and Keith Arkell. Katarzyna annotates the latter game inside.

Magnus Meltdown

The pressure of expectation seemed to be playing on Magnus Carlsen's mind when the Grand Chess Tour fourth leg began at St. Louis. In the press conference before the Rapid and Blitz he alluded to the others waiting for him to slip up, and slip up he did. The champ started with a defeat to Ding Liren and after a bad loss to Caruana where he obtained a terrible position in the opening, he subsided to 3½/9 in the Rapid. That included a loss to Sergei Karjakin and this episode against the overall tournament winner.

M.Carlsen-L.Aronian
Saint Louis (rapid) 2019
London System

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 d5 3 ♗f4 e6 4 e3 ♗d6

Magnus did not enjoy the first half of his recent trip to St. Louis. He was outplayed by Ding Liren in the game pictured above, and also lost to Caruana, Karjakin and overall winner Aronian.

5 ♗g3 0-0 6 ♘bd2 b6 7 c3 ♗b7 8 ♗d3 ♘bd7

Magnus has enjoyed great success in the London. Sometimes he generates a kingside attack and sometimes he secure a positional advantage with Black's light-squared bishop passively placed. Here he gets a bit of both.

9 ♕c2

Guarding e4, as if 9 ♕e2 ♘e4 10 0-0 f5.

9...♗xg3!? 10 hxg3 h6

If 11 0-0-0 ♘g4 12 ♖df1 c5, which explains Magnus's next. I was expecting 11 ♘e5 c5 12 f4.

11 ♖h4 c5 12 ♘e5 ♖c8 13 f4 a6!?

Trying to wind him up, as Jon Speelman would say. Now 14 ♘xd7 ♕xd7 15 g4 was worth consideration.

14 a4 cxd4 15 exd4 ♘xe5?!

15...b5! 16 axb5 axb5 17 ♗xb5 ♘xe5 18 fxe5 ♘e4 gives Black good play for the pawn; White cannot castle and Black might play ...♕g5 and ...f6.

16 fxe5 ♘d7 17 ♘f3

White intends g3-g4 and 0-0-0, and has pretty much everything he wanted.

17...f6

If 17...♕e7 18 ♖h5! intending g3-g4.

18 exf6 ♕xf6?!

Not 18...♖xf6 19 ♕e2 a5 20 0-0-0 ♗c6 21 ♖dh1 ♗xa4 22 g4, but 18...♘xf6 19 ♘e5 ♘e4 was a better try.

19 ♖f4 ♕e7 20 ♗h7+

20 ♕e2 ♕d6 21 ♕e3 keeps control of the position; e6 is weak and White continues ♔e1-f1-g1 and ♖e1, while Black's position looks prospectless.

20...♔h8

21 ♘h4?

21 0-0-0 ♖xf4 22 gxf4 b5 was still unclear.

21...♖xf4! 22 ♘g6+ ♔xh7 23 ♘xe7+ ♖e4+!

Magnus must have missed his knight is now trapped behind enemy lines.

24 ♕xe4+ dxe4 25 ♘xc8 ♗xc8 26 b4 ♔g6 27 c4 ♔f7 28 b5

28 a5 bxa5 29 ♖xa5 was a better chance.

28...e5!

Changing the pawn structure favourably and so winning the game.

29 dxe5

Black also prevails after 29 a5 exd4 30 axb6 ♘c5 31 bxa6 ♘xa6 32 ♖a5 e3 33 c5 d3 34 c6 d2+ 35 ♔e2 ♗g4+.

29...a5

Fixing the weakness on a4.

30 ♖d1 ♘xe5 31 ♖d4 ♗e6 32 ♖xe4 ♘xc4 33 ♔e2 ♘d6 34 ♖f4+ ♔e7 35 ♔d3 ♘b7 0-1

Things got worse in the Blitz as Magnus lost 6(!) games and fell off his perch atop the live ratings in Blitz as well as Rapid. He lost twice to Yu Yangyi who had a great tournament overall, ending in a tie for second with Maxime Vachier-Lagrave. Yu Yangyi, who was a wild card, would have forced a play-off had he found the winning plan in a bishop and pawn endgame against Shak Mamedyarov in the last round. We will look at that next month.

Yu Yangyi and Ding Liren together with Sergey Karjakin were the best Blitz performers. The other wild card Richard Rapport acquitted himself well, but was undone by Ding's creative approach as 8 h4!? was worthy of Rapport himself.

Ding Liren-R.Rapport
Saint Louis (blitz) 2019
Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4 e6 2 c4 ♘f6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 g3 ♗b7 5 ♗g2 ♗e7 6 0-0 0-0 7 ♖e1 ♘a6 8 h4!?

Avoiding ♘c3 ♘e4 for the moment and challenging Black to find a better move than ...c5 or ...d5 which are the customary responses to anything else.

8...♖e8 9 ♘c3 ♘e4 10 ♗d2 c5

10...d5 would have prevented White's next.

Ding Liren and Richard Rapport drew two games at the St. Louis Rapid & Blitz, but Ding would prevail in their third overall and second blitz encounter in part thanks to the bold 8 h4!?.

11 d5 exd5 12 cxd5 ♗f6?

12...♘xd2 13 ♕xd2 d6 was necessary.

13 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 14 ♘g5

14...♖d4

14...♖e8 15 ♕c2 g6 16 ♘e4 d6 17 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 18 ♗c3 is also rotten for Black.

15 ♕c2 g6 16 ♗c3 ♘b4 17 ♕b3 a5? 18 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 19 d6 ♕f6 20 ♗xb7 1-0

Aronian's victory in the Rapid and Blitz propelled him up the GCT standings and he is well placed to qualify for the final. Each player competes in five events.

Standings after four legs: 1 Magnus Carlsen (Norway) 38 (3 events played); 2 Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (France) 33.3 (3); 3 Levon Aronian (Armenia) 24 (2); 4 Wesley So (USA) 22 (2); 5 Ding Liren (China) 21.3 (3); 6 Fabiano Caruana (USA) 19 (3); 7 Ian Nepomniachtchi (Russia) 18 (3); 8 Sergey Karjakin (Russia) 14.5 (3); 9 Hikaru Nakamura (USA) 14 (3); 10 Vishy Anand (India) 13 (2); 11 Anish Giri (Netherlands) 8 (2); 12 Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (Azerbaijan) 7 (3).

The top four qualify for the extra pay day and the likely lads should be clear after the Sinquefield Cup which ends as the magazine should be reaching you.

Remembering Kupreichik

Viktor Kupreichik (1949-2017) was one of the great attacking players of the post-war Soviet era. If you want to reinvigorate your chess, just play through some of his games. His most famous victory:

A young Kupreichik, whom older readers may remember winning Hastings 1981/82.

V.Kupreichik-M.Tal
GMs vs Young Masters, Sochi 1970
Sicilian Classical

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 ♘c3 ♘f6 6 ♗c4 ♕b6 7 ♘b3 e6 8 ♗e3 ♕c7 9 f4 a6 10 ♗d3 b5 11 a3 ♗e7 12 ♕f3 ♗b7 13 0-0 ♖c8 14 ♖ae1 0-0 15 ♕h3

The computer wants to play 15...h5 here, heaven help us.

Our Executive Editor found the going tough against Shak Mamedyarov's second Eltaj Safarli, but otherwise did pretty well at the Kupreichik Memorial and might have defeated Paravyan.

15...b4 16 ♘d5!? exd5 17 exd5 ♘b8 18 ♗d4

Intending ♖xe7, ♗xf6 and ♕xh7#. Kupreichik calmly sends his forces to the kingside and Tal found out what it's like to play against himself!

18...g6 19 ♖f3 ♗xd5 20 ♖fe3 ♗d8 21 ♕h4 ♘bd7 22 ♕h6 ♕b7 23 ♖g3 ♘c5?

23...♗b6 24 ♔h1 ♔h8 25 f5 (or 25 ♖e7 ♗xd4 26 ♘xd4 ♘g8) 25...♗xd4 26 ♘xd4 ♘e5 was the way to defend.

24 ♘xc5 dxc5 25 f5!!

25...cxd4

Or if 25...♖c7 26 ♗xc5!.

26 fxg6 fxg6 27 ♗xg6 ♔h8 28 ♕xf8+ ♘g8 29 ♗f5 ♖b8 30 ♖e8 ♕f7 31 ♖h3!! 1-0

I was very pleased to be invited to a memorial tournament held in Kupreichik's memory in Minsk alongside the World Cadet Under-8, Under-10 and Under-12 Blitz and Rapid Championships. It was my first experience of 15 minute plus 10 seconds and it took some getting used to.

I did have some fun playing five GMs in 10 games and managed three draws against them, including a 71-move battle with the legendary Evgeny Sveshnikov that ended in king versus king. On the final day I was paired against two Russian GMs, the first being the 2626-rated David Paravyan.

M.Pein-D.Paravyan
Kupreichik Memorial (rapid), Minsk 2019

I decided to play for a position where the centralised king was a help not a hindrance, so was pleased when the rooks came off down the c-file in this typical Grünfeld endgame.

22 ♘d4 a6

If 22...♔f8 23 ♘b5 a6? 24 ♗xb6.

23 ♘b3

23 a4!? was perhaps stronger.

23...♘xb3 24 axb3 b5 25 ♗c5 ♗e5 26 g3 g5?!

26...f5 was sensible, liquidating and freeing a path for the king, but Black no doubt wanted to win.

27 f3 ♗c3 28 ♔e3 ♗e6 29 b4

It felt like things were going well.

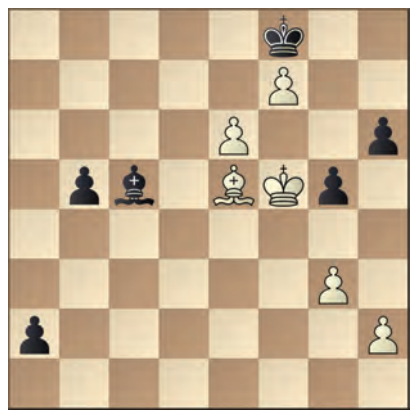
29...f6 30 f4

30 ♗d4! ♗xb4 31 ♗xf6 was the right way to do it, as now Black might have defended with 30...gxf4+ 31 gxf4 ♔f7.

30...h6? 31 ♗d4! ♗xb4 32 ♗xf6 ♗d7 33 f5 a5 34 ♗d4 a4 35 e5

White's pawns are much the more dangerous and his control of the a1-h8 diagonal makes this a winning position.

35...a3 36 e6 ♗c6 37 ♗e4! ♗xe4 38 ♔xe4 a2 39 f6 ♗a3 40 ♔f5 ♔f8 41 f7! ♗d6 42 ♔g6 ♔e7 43 ♔f5 ♔f8 44 ♗f6 ♗e7 45 ♗e5 ♗c5



46 ♗f6

My time was up. Unfortunately 10 seconds a move just wasn't enough time to find the win, which was there with 46 ♔f6 (and not 46 ♔g6? ♔e7) 46...b4 47 e7+! ♗xe7+ 48 ♔g6 and there's nothing to be done about ♗g7# or ♗g7+ and f8♕.

46...♗e7 47 ♗a1

It was still on (47 ♗e5 ♗c5 48 ♔f6 b4 49 e7+!), but I just didn't see it.

47...♗d6 48 ♗f6 ½-½

60 Seconds with...

WGM Katarzyna Toma

Born: September 16th 1985, Częstochowa (go on, try to pronounce it!), Poland.

Place of residence: Evesham, Worcestershire. I work as a locum vet and every few months I move. Starting from October it's going to be Northampton.

Occupation: Veterinary surgeon.

Enjoyable? We're having love and hate relationship with my work.

And home life? Still on the single market.

But sometimes good to escape to: A new place, such as when I'll go on a sightseeing trip to Tunisia in September.

Sports played or followed: I like swimming, hiking and playing table-tennis.

A favourite novel? I don't have just one favourite title, and generally read fantasy, classical and modern novels.

Piece of music? My preferences are towards rock (Editors were my favourite band for quite a while), classical and instrumental music, like Secret Garden, and 80's stuff.

Film or TV series? I'm a bit of series addict. Currently watching *Dark* and *The Handmaid's Tale*.

What's the best thing about playing chess? Intellectual stimulation, travelling and meeting people.

And the worst? Morning rounds.

Your best move? I'm attached to my beloved 1 e4.

But less memorable than your worst move? 29 ♕e3 against David Eggleston from Torquay is going to haunt me for quite a while...

K.Toma-D.Eggleston
British Ch., Torquay 2019

29 ♕e3?? ♖e8 30 f5 d4 31 ♕c1 ♘xf5 32 ♖ef1 ♖exe6 33 ♗xf5 gxf5 34 ♖g3+ ♖g6 35 ♕c4 ♔h7 36 ♖xg6 ♖xg6 37 ♕f7+ ♖g7 38 ♕xh5+ ♔g8 39 ♖xf5 ♕e1+ 0-1

And a highly memorable opponent? I was quite impressed at tournament in 2004 when Alexei Shirov remembered in detail our two rapid games that we had played four years before. What a memory!

Favourite game of all time? I'm a bad, bad person and I don't have one.

The best three chess books: *Chess Informant* back in the day. I got my first WGM norm after reading Zlotnik's *Chess Knowledge, Training, Mastery* and I like to do puzzles from Sergey Ivashchenko's series *Chess School*.

Is FIDE doing a good job? I like their support for women chess and they now have a great PR team, but let's wait with any applause a bit longer.

Or your National Federation? I am still trying to figure it out!

Any advice for either? The aim is to serve the game and the players not administrators' egos.

Can chess make one happy? Definitely.

A tip please for the club player: Have fun with chess, but remember that if you want to improve you need to invest time in training. There are no shortcuts.

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Boris Gelfand's Remarkable Comeback

Yochanan Afek reports back from the star-studded Netanya International Chess Festival

A big International Festival was organised in the coastal Israeli city of Netanya by the Israeli Chess Federation and the local municipality, supported by the generosity of businessman Roman Abramovich, likely best known to the readers as the owner of Chelsea Football Club.

It has been quite a while since Netanya last hosted a strong international chess event, but the city has a long and respectable tradition of grandmaster tournaments. They were initially part of the popular Schach-Kait (Chess & Holiday) festival. Over the years various master tournaments were held as well as many editions of a grandmaster crown group, whose winners included the world-class icons Bobby Fischer (1968), Sammy Reshevsky (1969), Lubomir Kavalek (1971 and 1973), and Jan Timman (1975), as well as local heroes Yair Kraidman (1964) and Moshe Czerniak (1965).

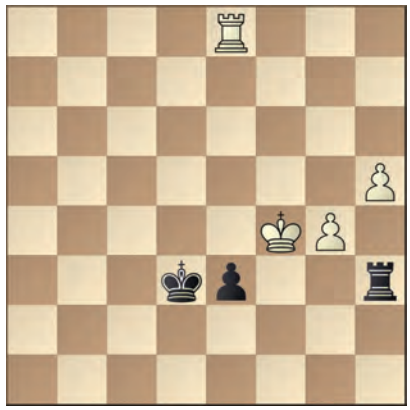
Played in the VIP room of the city's football stadium and consisting of two major sections, this year's edition of the Netanya International Festival was both the biggest and the strongest individual event ever to be held in Israel. The remarkable production was superbly run by an experienced team headed up by organisers Amiram Kaplan and Rami Tal, while GM Alik Gershon did a remarkable job in charge of the smooth live transmission.

In the 'Masters' five world-class grandmasters and Israel's top five players formed a category 18 super-tournament with a prize fund of $100,000. The powerful field was led by two 2700+ players, the American, formerly Cuban, star Leinier Dominguez Perez and the eight-time Russian Champion Peter Svidler. The youngest player in the field was the 23-year-old Russian Daniil Dubov, the current world champion of rapid chess, while the eldest was the 51-year-old Israeli Ilya Smirin.

The early leader in the Masters was Luke McShane, who surprisingly defeated both Maxim Rodshtein and Pavel Eljanov in the opening two rounds. The latter was defeated in a long, riveting game, which I'm pleased to report Luke has annotated elsewhere in this issue. In the third round, however, Luke was beaten in just 25 moves by Tamir Nabaty, who thus claimed the overall lead despite having missed a study-like opportunity in the opening round.

Ilya Smirin might be in his fifties, but still produces plenty of attacking and exciting games.

T.Nabaty-I.Smirin
Round 1



Here White missed his last opportunity: 66 g5! ♖h4+ 67 ♔f3 ♖xh5 68 ♖xe3+ ♔d4 69 ♖e4+ ♔d5 70 ♖a4! (this skewer is the tactical device that was missed; naturally, 70 ♖g4 ♔e6 71 g6 ♖h8 is just a draw) 70...♔e6 71 ♔g4 ♖h1 72 ♖f4, cutting off the black king and so winning.

66 h6? e2 67 g5 ♔d2 68 ♔f5 ♖e3 69 ♖xe3 ♔xe3 70 h7 e1♕ 71 h8♕ ♕b1+

Now it's a forced draw.

72 ♔e6 ♕b6+ 73 ♔f7 ♕b7+ 74 ♔g6 ♕e4+ 75 ♔f7 ♕d5+ 76 ♔g6 ♕e4+ ½-½

Nabaty held the lead for just one round, being immediately defeated by Dominguez, before in the fifth round Dubov joined the new leader after inflicting on Rodshtein his third defeat. In the meantime a special record had been set in the following game.

L.McShane-I.Smirin
Round 4
Sicilian Defence

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 g3 d5 4 exd5 exd5

5 d4 ♘c6 6 ♗g2 ♘f6 7 0-0 ♗e7 8 dxc5 ♗xc5 9 a3 0-0 10 ♘c3 ♖e8 11 b4 d4 12 ♘a4 ♗f8 13 c4 dxc3

Possible too was 13...♗f5 14 ♗b2 d3 15 ♖e1 ♖xe1+ 16 ♕xe1 ♖c8 with a roughly level position.

14 ♘xc3 ♗g4 15 ♗e3 ♕c8 16 ♕b3 ♗e6 17 ♕b2 ♗h3 18 ♖fd1 ♗xg2 19 ♔xg2 ♕f5 20 h3 ♖ac8 21 ♕b3

21...♖xe3!?

One! The first of four accepted exchange sacrifices is a speculative attempt to unbalance an even position. A normal approach would see such moves as 21...a5 22 b5 ♘e5 23 ♘xe5 ♖xe5 24 ♖ac1 ♗c5 25 ♗d4, with equality.

22 fxe3 ♘e5 23 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 24 ♖ac1 ♕xe3 25 ♕b2

White could have maintained his slight advantage with 25 ♕c2! ♕e6 26 ♕d3.

25...♘h5 26 ♘e2 ♖e8 27 ♖d2 ♕e4+ 28 ♔h2 g6 29 ♖f1 ♗h6 30 ♖c2 ♕d3 31 ♕a2?

31 ♖g1 ♗e3 32 ♖g2 ♘f6 would have maintained the rough balance.

31...♖xe2+!

Two! Black takes advantage of delay of White's careless choice to seize the initiative.

32 ♖xe2 ♕xg3+ 33 ♔h1 ♕xh3+ 34 ♔g1 ♕g3+ 35 ♔h1 ♕h3+ 36 ♔g1 ♗e3+?!

Following 36...♕g4+ 37 ♔h2 ♗f4+ 38 ♖xf4 ♕xf4+ Black is better, whereas after the text it's easier for White to defend.

37 ♖xe3!

This forced move takes us to three.

37...♕xe3+ 38 ♕f2 ♕g5+ 39 ♔h2 ♕e7 40 ♕xa7 ♕e5+ 41 ♔g1 ♘f4

42 ♖xf4! ♕xf4 43 ♕xb7 h5

In queen endings with passed pawns the distance from promotion is more relevant than the number of pawns.

44 b5 h4 45 b6

Forcing Black to give perpetual check.

45...♕e3+ 46 ♔h2 ♕f2+ 47 ♔h1 ♕f1+ 48 ♔h2 ½-½

Meanwhile Boris Gelfand missed a great chance to score his first victory, giving him five consecutive draws, before finally opening his account against Smirin's favourite King's Indian.

T.Nabaty-B.Gelfand
Round 5

The most severe double error in the entire tournament was made here.

41 d6?? ♖xd6?

41...fxg4! would have won since 42 ♖xf6? allows 42...♕h2#.

42 ♖g2 ♖d3 43 ♕a7 ♖d7

A subtle retreat would have done the trick: 43...♕c7! 44 gxf5 e3! 45 f6+ (or 45 ♖xg6+ ♔f8 46 ♖g2 ♖d2) 45...♔f8 46 ♕a3+ ♖d6, winning.

44 ♕e3 f4

44...fxg4! was still the right move.

45 ♖xf4 ♖h3? 46 ♖g3

The win has vanished.

46...♖xg3+ 47 ♕xg3 ♕c5+ 48 ♔f1 ♕d6 49 ♔g1 ♕b6+ 50 ♖f2 ♕c7 51 ♕xc7 ♖xc7 52 g5 ♗c8 53 ♖f6 e3 54 ♔f1 ♗g4 55 ♗d5 ♖d7 56 ♗f3 ♗xf3 57 ♖xf3 ♖d5 58 ♖g3 ♖e5 59 ♔e2 ♔f7 60 b3 ♔f8 ½-½

The Trends in Chess Openings

The top twenty openings as played by International Masters and Grandmasters in July

1	=	Reti Opening	*195 games*
2	⇧	King's Indian Defence	*180 games*
3	⇩	1 d4 ♘f6 sidelines	*141 games*
4	⇧	Queen's Gambit Declined	*128 games*
5	⇩	Caro-Kann Defence	*119 games*
6	⇧	Nimzo-Indian Defence	*113 games*
7	=	Sicilian, Najdorf variation	*101 games*
8	⇩	Slav Defence	*98 games*
9	=	English, 1...e5	*86 games*
10	⇧	Sicilian, 2 ♘f3 d6 sidelines	*86 games*
11	⇧	English, 1...e6	*84 games*
12	⇧	Ruy Lopez, Berlin	*84 games*
13	⇩	English, 1...♘f6	*83 games*
14	⇧	English, 1...c5	*80 games*
15	⇧	Catalan Opening	*79 games*
16	⇩	Queen's Indian Defence	*77 games*
17	⇩	Sicilian, 2 Nf3 sidelines	*74 games*
18	⇧	1 d4 d5 sidelines	*73 games*
19	=	Grünfeld Def., Classical	*70 games*
20	⇧	Petroff Def., 3 ♘xe5 var.	*55 games*

3,442 games played between 1-31 July where both players were rated over 2400 Elo

Source: TWIC.
Compiled by *HIARCS 14.*

In association with
HIARCS Chess Explorer - hiarcs.com
and *The Week in Chess* -- theweekinchess.com

The seventh round was perhaps the most significant turning point in the Masters when as many as four of the five games produced a decisive result. McShane was the hero of the hour inflicting on Dominguez, the proud leader, his first and only defeat to open up the battle for first place.

L.McShane-L.Dominguez Perez
Round 7
Ruy Lopez

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 ♘f6 4 0-0 ♘xe4 5 ♖e1 ♘d6 6 ♘xe5 ♗e7 7 ♗f1 ♘xe5 8 ♖xe5 0–0 9 d4 ♗f6 10 ♖e1 ♖e8 11 ♗f4

Back in the fourth game of the first world championship match, Steinitz-Zukertort, New York 1886, saw instead 11 c3 ♖xe1 12 ♕xe1 ♘f5 13 ♗f4 d6 with equality.

11...♖xe1 12 ♕xe1 ♘e8 13 ♘c3 ♗xd4 14 ♘d5 d6 15 ♗g5 f6 16 ♗h4!? ♗xb2

16...g5!? could have been considered when after 17 c3 ♗e5 18 ♗g3 c6 19 ♘e3 d5 20 ♕d2 ♘d6 21 ♗d3 ♕e7 22 ♖e1 ♗d7 White still needs to prove that he has sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

17 ♖b1 ♗e5 18 f4 c6 19 fxe5 cxd5 20 exf6 ♘xf6 21 ♗d3 ♗d7 22 ♕g3 ♗c6 23 ♗g5! ♔h8?!

Allowing a dangerous sacrificial follow-up, whereas after, for example, 23...a6 24 ♕h4? h6 25 ♗xh6 gxh6 Black has nothing much to worry about.

24 ♕h4

24...h6?

Playing with fire. The more cautious 24...♕d7 25 ♗xf6 gxf6 26 ♕xf6+ ♕g7 27 ♕xd6 ♖e8 28 ♖f1 seems just a little bit more pleasant to play as White whose king looks the safer.

25 ♗xh6! gxh6 26 ♕xh6+ ♔g8 27 ♕g6+ ♔h8 28 ♖b4!

This rook lift is the most powerful way to exploit the exposed enemy king, as the natural alternative 28 ♖f1 ♕b6+ 29 ♔h1 ♖f8 30 h3 ♕c7 31 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 32 ♕xf6+ ♔g8 33 h4 ♕f7 would allow tougher resistance.

28...♘e4 29 ♗xe4 dxe4 30 ♖b3! E3

30...♕h4 is vigorously met by 31 ♖g3 (31 ♖h3 ♕xh3! 32 ♕f6+ ♔h7 33 gxh3 ♖g8+ 34 ♔f2 d5 is not yet over).

31 ♖b4!

A deadly and decisive switchback, and not 31 ♖xe3? ♕b6 when White has nothing better than perpetual check.

31...♗d7

31...♕e7? loses to 32 ♖g4.

32 ♕h6+ ♔g8 33 ♕g6+ ♔h8 34 ♕h6+ ♔g8

Repeating so is common practice in time pressure and now the lifted rook finally completes its deadly transfer to the kingside.

35 ♖h4 ♕xh4

The skewer following 35...♕e7 36 ♕h8+ ♔f7 37 ♕h7+ ♔e8 38 ♕g8+ ♕f8 39 ♕xf8+ ♔xf8 40 ♖h8+ gives Black no hope.

36 ♕xh4 ♖e8 37 ♔f1!

The king neutralises the dangerous advanced e-pawn, allowing a free hand for White's queen and connected passed pawn pair.

37...e2+ 38 ♔e1 ♖e6 39 ♕d8+ ♗e8 40 g4 b5 41 h4 ♔g7 42 h5 ♗f7 43 ♕g5+ ♔h7 44 ♕xb5 1-0

The second unbeaten player to suffer was Dubov at the hands of Eljanov.

The moment of the game. Top seed Leinier Dominguez Perez looks resigned to his fate as Luke McShane plays the deadly rook lift 31 ♖b4, spelling disaster for the exposed black king.

P.Eljanov-D.Dubov
Round 7

50 ♖f7!? 50 ♖f4! maintains winning chances.

50...♕g3+ 51 ♔f1 ♕h3+ 52 ♔e1 ♕h4+??

A decisive error. Instead, 52...♕g3+ 53 ♔d1 ♕g1+ would have secured the draw.

53 ♔d1 ♕xh5 54 ♖f5 ♕h2 55 ♖f1! 1-0

A second switchback of the lifted rook. The threat of 56 ♖h1 is unstoppable.

For the Ukrainian this victory signalled an amazing comeback of three consecutive wins that would lift him from the very bottom of the tournament chart all the way to third place. Meanwhile Rodshtein continued his recovery from a rather slow start, this time at the expense of Nabaty, while Smirin caught Svidler having an unusually weak day at the office. That all meant that at the end of the seventh round Dominguez remained the sole leader with 4½/7, leading a chasing pack of four by just half a point.

Reaching the money time, the overall fighting spirit was very much maintained and Boris Gelfand exploited the advantage of the white pieces to close the gap at the top.

B.Gelfand-L.McShane
Round 8
King's Indian Defence

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 d4 0-0 6 ♗e2 e5 7 0-0 ♘a6

Not the most fashionable variation of the Classical King's Indian, although it has its point of developing the knight without obstructing the other pieces.

8 ♗e3 c6 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 11 h3 ♘c7 12 ♖fd1 ♖e8 13 b4 ♘h5 14 ♖ac1 ♘f4 15 ♗f1 ♘fe6 16 c5!

Creating a stronghold for a future invasion by both knights. Another promising idea in 16 ♘d5!? should be precisely handled by a subtle switchback to drive back the invading knight, namely 16...♘a6! 17 b5 ♘b8!.

16...f6 17 ♘d2

Consistently heading for d6.

17...a5 18 a3 f5 19 exf5 gxf5 20 ♘c4 axb4 21 axb4 f4 22 ♗d2 ♘d4 23 ♘d6

The first knight to use the stronghold, if, however, definitely not the last.

23...♖f8 24 ♘xc8! ♖axc8 25 ♗c4+ ♔h8 26 ♘e4 ♘cb5 27 ♔f1 ♖cd8 28 ♖a1 h6 29 ♖dc1 ♔h7 30 ♗c3 ♘xc3 31 ♖xc3 ♖d7 32 ♗d3 ♔h8 33 ♖ca3 ♖fd8

Even after 33...♘f5!? 34 b5 ♖fd8 35 ♗e2 ♖d4 36 ♖a8 ♖f8 37 bxc6 bxc6 38 ♗f3 White is better.

34 ♖a8 ♘b3? 35 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8

36 ♘d6!! e4?!

36...♖b8 is obviously met by 37 ♖a7.

37 ♘f7+ ♔h7

After 37...♔g8 38 ♘xd8 ♘xa1 (if 38...♗xa1 39 ♗c4+) 39 ♗xe4 ♘b3 40 ♔e2

The new Vassily Smyslov or Viktor Korchnoi? Boris Gelfand looks set to be a tough opponent for even the world's leading grandmasters throughout at least his fifties, and possibly beyond.

The Winner Almost Takes It All!

Victory in the strongest competition ever held in Israel brought the country's best ever player back to the forefront of public consciousness, after a rather long period of inconsistency. With seven draws and two wins Boris Gelfand was the only player to finish undefeated in Netanya, while his result earnt him a place in the final leg of the FIDE Grand Prix cycle which will be held in Israel in December. Speaking at the closing ceremony, Boris thanked everyone who had made the Netanya International such a success, while praising the support of both his family and long-time second Alexander Khuzman.

Boris celebrated his 51st birthday on the second day of the tournament, but was not the oldest participant in the Masters, being five months younger than Ilya Smirin. Incidentally, both were born in Minsk in 1968. Ilya emigrated to Israel in 1991, Boris following him seven years later, and ever since they have both been pillars of the Israeli chess community and national team, while in 1999 they jointly won the only ever Israeli 'Super Championship'.

Gelfand's amazing career started when he was just a teenager, winning the Belorussian Championship in 1984 and 1985, as well as the European Junior Championship in 1985. Ever since then Boris has won or shared first in numerous major events: Palma de Mallorca Open 1989; Tilburg 1990; Belgrade 1991; Wijk aan Zee 1992; Rubinstein Memorial, 1998 and 2000; Melody Amber Rapid 1999; Pamplona 2004; Biel 2005; Alekhine Memorial 2013; Tal Memorial 2013.

Boris is a six-time world championship candidate, as well as the winner of the 2009 World Cup. He shared second place with Kramnik at the world championship tournament in Mexico in 2007 and in 2011 won the candidates tournament to challenge Vishy Anand for the world crown. The match ended level at 6-6, but Anand narrowly prevailed in the tie-break. This highlight of Boris's career left an unforgettable impression on the Israeli general public. If you happened to miss this experience at the time, let me make a heartfelt recommendation to watch one of the best chess documentaries ever produced. Read more about it here: en.chessbase.com/post/album-61-an-intimate-award-winning-documentary

Boris has played in 11 Olympiads, helping the USSR win the gold medals at Novi Sad in 1990, twice for Belarus and then on board one for Israel, who secured team silver at Dresden, 2008 and bronze at Khanty-Mansiysk, 2010. He is a member of the chess club of his hometown, Rishon LeZion, and while his chess career had appeared to be on the way down, Boris's impressive comeback in Netanya seems to suggest otherwise. We write off such fighters at our peril.

the fall of a second pawn is unavoidable.
38 ♗xe4+ ♔g8 39 ♘xd8 ♗xa1 40 ♔e2 ♘c1+ 41 ♔f3 ♘a2 42 b5 ♘b4 43 b6 ♗d4 44 ♘xb7 ♘a6 45 ♗xc6 ♘xc5 46 ♘xc5 ♗xc5 Pinning his last hopes on the opposite-coloured bishops, but to no avail.
47 b7 ♗d6 48 ♔e4 ♔f7 49 ♔f5 ♗c7 50 ♗d5+
The black king is unable to cover both wings.
50...♔e7 51 ♔g6 1-0

Pavel Eljanov continued his revival journey thanks to an exemplary kingside attack launched from...the opposite side of the board.

P.Eljanov-T.Nabaty
Round 8

White converts his advantage in grand style with a deadly double rook lift.
34 ♖c6! ♔h7 35 ♖ec1 ♖xb2 36 ♖c7
To pin the f7-pawn ahead of the final attack.
36...♕d8 37 ♖1c6!
Doubling the heavy artillery on the sixth rank leaves Black without a good defence.
37...♖b1+ 38 ♔h2 ♖g8 39 ♖xg6! ♖xg6 40 ♖xf7+ 1-0
Black resigned in view of the neat follow-up 40...♖g7 41 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 42 ♘e6+.

At the same time the leading game of the round between Dubov and Dominguez ended in a draw allowed Gelfand to catch up and join the American in the lead on '+2', half a point ahead of Dubov and Smirin.

All seemed set for a titanic final round, but Dominguez offered to split the point as early as move 14, despite playing with the white pieces against his co-leader. That meant that he and Gelfand each won $22,500, albeit with the home favourite declared the overall winner on tie-break. Elsewhere Eljanov won the battle for third place, skilfully converting a promising rook endgame against Smirin.

The Open

143 players from 8 countries took part in the Open which was held alongside the Masters, including 22 grandmasters and 13 International Masters. The oldest participant was Efim Lazebnikov (85), while the youngest was the Israeli under-8 girls champion Evelina Khairova. The total prize fund was 170,000 NIS (approximately 43,000 Euros), with 30,000 NIS going to the clear winner, the Russian GM Mikhail Antipov who led the field in the decisive stages of the event and ended undefeated with 7½/9 points. Ukrainian GM Alexander Moiseenko and Israeli GM Tal Baron (ISR) shared second place, half a point adrift. The best senior was the three-time Israel Champion IM Nathan Birnboim, while the best woman was former Israel champion WFM Michal Lahav, who faced a strong field and made a WGM norm.

A.Moiseenko-E.Rozentalis
Round 9
Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 a3 ♗b7 5 ♘c3 g6 6 ♕c2 ♗xf3 7 exf3 ♗g7 8 ♗e3 ♘c6 9 0-0-0 ♘e7 10 g4 d5 11 h4 dxc4 12 h5 ♘fd5 13 ♗xc4 ♘xc3 14 ♕xc3 c6 15 h6!?
This natural move was apparently well anticipated by Black. As such, 15 ♔b1!?, maintaining the tension along the h-file, seems to be the preferable option. **15...♗f6! 16 g5 ♘d5! 17 ♗xd5 cxd5 18 ♕c6+**
Black's idea becomes apparent: 18 gxf6?? would now be met by 18...♖c8.
18...♔f8 19 ♔b1 ♖c8 20 ♕b7 ♖c7 21 ♕a6 ♗xg5 22 f4!

White spots new paths for counterplay to justify his pawn sacrifice.
22...♗f6 23 ♖c1 ♔e7! 24 f5! ♖d7?!
Boldly rejecting 24...gxf5 25 ♖xc7+ ♕xc7 26 ♖c1 ♕b8 27 ♗f4!! ♕xf4 28 ♕b7+ ♔e8 29 ♕c6+ ♔e7, with a draw.
25 ♗d2! ♗xd4 26 ♗b4+ ♔f6 27 ♕d3 ♗c5 28 fxe6 fxe6 29 ♕f3+ ♔e7 30 ♖xc5! bxc5 31 ♗xc5+ ♔e8 32 ♖e1 ♖e7 33 ♕g4 ♕d7?
The losing move as now the queen obstructs her own king. Essential was 33...♕c8, though White is still better following 34 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 35 ♕b4+ ♔d7 36 ♕a4+ ♔e7 37 ♕xa7+ ♕d7 38 ♕d4!.
34 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 35 ♕g5+ ♔f7 36 ♕f4+ ♔e7 37 ♕g5+ ♔f7 38 ♕e5!

38...♖f8
Alternatively, 38...♖c8 39 ♕g7+ ♔e8 40 ♕f6 ♖c6 41 ♕h8+ ♔e7 42 ♕xh7+ ♔d6 43 ♕xg6 and the advanced passed pawn decides the battle.
39 ♖c1 ♔g8 40 ♖c7 ♖f5 41 ♖c8+ ♖f8 42 ♕h8+! 1-0
Not the only way to win, but definitely the shortest one.

One of the most experienced players in the Open was the Russian-Israeli Semen Dvoirys. At the age of 60 he is still capable of demonstrating exemplary attacking play, even when up against a talented teenager.

Just like the London Chess Classic - which will take place this year from November 29th until December 8th - the Netanya International featured a strong Open alongside the top section.

S.Dvoirys-O.Globus
Round 6
Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♗f5 5 ♘g3 ♗g6 6 h4 h6 7 ♘f3 ♘d7 8 h5 ♗h7 9 ♗d3 ♗xd3 10 ♕xd3 e6 11 ♗d2 ♘gf6 12 0-0-0 ♗e7 13 ♕e2 ♕b6 14 ♘e5 ♖d8 15 ♖he1 c5

16 ♘f5! cxd4?

16...♘xe5 17 dxe5 ♘d5 18 ♕g4! exf5 19 ♕xg7 ♖f8 20 ♗xh6 ♕e6 was the lesser evil, although here White is undoubtedly for choice.

17 ♘g6!! fxg6 18 ♘xg7+ ♔f7 19 ♘xe6 gxh5

Likewise, after 19...♘f8 20 ♘xd8+ ♗xd8 21 ♕c4+ ♔g7 22 hxg6 ♘xg6 23 ♖e6 ♕c7 24 ♕xd4 ♕f7 25 ♖de1 ♗b6 26 ♕c4 White should win.

20 ♕c4 ♖dg8 21 ♘xd4+ ♔f8 22 ♖xe7! ♔xe7 23 ♖e1+ ♔d8 24 ♘e6+ ♔e8 25 ♘c5+ ♔d8 26 ♗a5! 1-0

We conclude our coverage with an original endgame study, which was dedicated to the players and officials of the Netanya International.

Is that all I won? Boris Gelfand looks rather anxious, but whether it was due to a zero missing on his cheque or that it had been a while since he balanced on top of a podium we're not quite sure. He is flanked by the current world no.10, Dominguez, and a real fighter in Eljanov.

Amatzia Avni
Variantim 2019

White cannot stop the enemy advanced pawn, but where lie his counter-chances?

Ed. – In case you fancy a reward for testing your calculation and creativity on this fascinating position, there's a copy of Yochanan's Extreme Chess Tactics *for the first correct entry drawn. To enter email info@chess.co.uk or send your name and address, with the main variations, to Chess & Bridge Ltd., 44 Baker Street, London, W1U 7RT, postmarked no later than 1st October.*

Netanya Masters - Netanya, Israel - 23 June to 2 July 2019 (Category rating 18, average rating = 2677 Elo)

	Player	Country	Rating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Pts	TPR
1	Boris Gelfand	ISR	2676	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	5½	2757
2	Leinier Dominguez Perez	USA	2760	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	0	1	1	5½	2748
3	Pavel Eljanov	UKR	2655	½	½	*	1	0	½	1	0	1	½	5	2722
4	Daniil Dubov	RUS	2700	½	½	0	*	1	½	½	½	½	1	5	2717
5	Maxim Rodshtein	ISR	2685	½	0	1	0	*	1	½	0	1	½	4½	2676
6	Peter Svidler	RUS	2737	½	½	½	½	0	*	0	1	½	1	4½	2670
7	Ilia Smirin	ISR	2594	0	½	0	½	½	1	*	½	½	1	4½	2686
8	Luke McShane	ENG	2688	0	1	1	½	1	0	½	*	0	0	4	2633
9	Tamir Nabaty	ISR	2678	½	0	0	½	0	½	½	1	*	1	4	2634
10	Evgeny Postny	ISR	2601	½	0	½	0	½	0	0	1	0	*	2½	2519

Best of British

In amongst a busy summer of chess on a number of continents, David Howell and Luke McShane both produced impressive and instructive victories

It hasn't just been in Torquay that our leading grandmasters have been busy this summer. As we saw in last month's *Overseas News*, David Howell had a fine result at the Saint Louis Summer Classic, while Luke McShane was at his creative best in Netanya. We'll begin by enjoying David's fine win with his favourite Berlin Defence before Luke kindly explains how he overcame Pavel Eljanov in a gripping encounter.

S.Shankland-D.Howell
Saint Louis 2019
Ruy Lopez

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 ♘f6 4 0-0 ♘xe4 5 d4 ♘d6 6 ♗xc6 dxc6 7 dxe5 ♘f5 8 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 9 h3 ♗d7 10 ♖d1 ♔c8 11 g4!?

Ambitious play from Shankland, activating his kingside majority at the earliest possible moment.

11...♘e7 12 ♘g5 ♗e8 13 f4 h6 14 ♘e4 b6 15 c4 h5 16 ♔f2

White prepares to meet any ...♖h4 raid with ♔g3, but his position does appear a little overextended.

16...♘g6 17 ♘bc3 ♗e7 18 b3 ♗d7 19 ♔g3 ♗h4+ 20 ♔f3 ♗e7 21 ♘f2

Remaining ambitious and Howell now hits back hard with a second pawn break.

21...hxg4+ 22 hxg4 f5! 23 exf6?

White's pawns would have been ideally blockaded after 23 g5, but he really had to try this.

23...♗xf6 24 ♗b2 c5?

This might have been met with 25 ♖ab1, whereas 24...♘h4+! would just have been pretty strong: 25 ♔g3? g5! 26 fxg5 ♗e5+ 27 ♔h3 ♔b7! is a deadly attack, in view of 28 ♖xd7 ♖af8, while 25 ♔e2 ♖e8+ 26 ♔f1 ♖e3 leaves Black with a strong initiative.

25 ♖d2? ♖f8 26 f5

26...♘h4+! 27 ♔g3 ♗e5+! 28 ♔xh4 ♗f4

The threat of mate means that Black will pick up the exchange.

29 ♔h3 ♗xd2 30 ♘ce4 ♗h6 31 ♖d1 ♗c6 32 g5 ♖xf5 33 gxh6 gxh6 34 ♔g4 ♖f7

Materially-speaking, White is doing OK, but his exposed king remains a major cause for concern.

35 ♘f6 ♔b7 36 ♖d2 ♖g7+ 37 ♔f4 ♖g2 38 ♗e5 ♖f8 39 ♔e3 ♖g5 40 ♔f4 ♖g2 41 ♔e3 h5 42 ♘d3 ♖xd2 43 ♔xd2 h4

Harry is running!

44 ♘f4 ♖h8 45 ♘g4 ♖e8 46 ♗f6 ♖e4 47 ♗g5 h3 48 ♘h2 ♗d7!

Bringing the bishop round to target White's queenside.

49 ♘e2 ♗f5 50 ♗e3 ♖e8 51 ♘f4 ♗b1 52 ♘f1 ♗xa2 53 ♘xh3 ♗xb3 54 ♔c3 ♗d1 55 ♘f4 a5

The h-pawn might have gone, but Black has another passed rook's pawn and Howell made no mistake from here on.

56 ♗c1 ♗g4 57 ♘e3 ♗e6 58 ♘d3 ♖h8 59 ♗a3 ♖h3 60 ♔d2 ♖h2+ 61 ♔c3 ♖h3 62 ♔d2 ♗g8 63 ♗c1 ♗h7 64 ♘f4 ♖h4 65 ♘e2 c6 66 ♗a3 ♔a6 67 ♔c3 ♖e4 68 ♔d2 ♖e8 69 ♘c1 ♗g6 70 ♘g4 ♖e4 71 ♘e3 ♖h4 72 ♘e2 ♗h7 73 ♘c1 ♖d4+ 74 ♔c3 ♔b7 75 ♘f1 ♔c7 76 ♘d2 ♖h4 77 ♔b2 ♖h2 78 ♔c3 ♖h3+ 79 ♔b2 ♖h2 80 ♔c3 ♔d6 81 ♘cb3 ♖h3+ 82 ♔b2 ♖h2 83 ♔c1 ♖h4 84 ♔b2 a4 85 ♘f3 ♖xc4 0-1

Notes by Luke McShane

L.McShane-P.Eljanov
Netanya 2019
Reti Opening

1 c4 ♘f6 2 g3 e6 3 ♗g2 d5 4 ♘f3 ♗e7 5 0-0 0-0 6 b3 d4

An ambitious choice, seizing space in the centre. The conservative option 6...c5 7 ♗b2 ♘c6 8 e3 b6 is more common.

7 e3 c5 8 exd4 cxd4 9 ♖e1 ♘c6 10 ♗b2

Not a move to be made casually. In the Benoni structure this is a poor square (likewise b7 in a regular Benoni), since the bishop is blunted by the pawn on d4. However, in this game I had a specific idea in mind to liberate it.

10...♖e8 11 ♘e5 ♘xe5 12 ♖xe5 ♗d6

13 ♗xd4!?

A concept already tested by Gawain Jones and Grigoriy Oparin. In this position, it's the only way to fight for the advantage. 13 ♖e1?! is certainly too passive: 13...e5 14 d3 ♗g4 and Black has nothing to worry about.

13...♗xe5 14 ♗xe5

For the exchange White has a healthy pawn, excellent central control, and the bishops exert awkward pressure on the queenside.

14...♘d7 15 ♗b2 e5 16 ♘a3 ♘f6 17 d4 e4?

This is a bit too ambitious. Black later developed a dangerous kingside attack, but it could have been prevented. During the game I looked at 17...exd4 18 ♕xd4 ♕e7 19 ♘c2 ♗f5 20 ♘e3 ♗e4 21 ♘d5 ♗xd5 22 cxd5, with a balanced position.

18 ♘c2 ♗g4 19 ♕d2 ♗f3 20 ♗f1?

We were both playing ambitiously. I hoped to show that the bishop on f3 is cut off from the real action on the queenside, once the pawns start to roll, but 20 d5 was stronger.

20...♘g4 21 d5 ♕d6 22 ♗d4 ♕g6 23 ♘e3

23...♘xh2!?

Driving the game into a tactical maelstrom. The consequences are probably good for White, but playing slowly doesn't

David Howell had to settle for second place at both the Saint Louis Summer Classic and in the British Championship, but made energetic use of the Berlin Wall to beat Sam Shankland.

appear preferable: 23...♘e5 24 c5 ♘d3 25 d6 and the pawns look really menacing.

24 ♔xh2 ♕h6+ 25 ♗h3 ♗g4!

This clever move is the point of 23....♘xh2. Still, White has the better of it.

26 ♖h1! ♗xh3

26...♕xh3+ 27 ♔g1 simply leaves the queen trapped.

27 ♔g1

This is the point. The pin is very awkward for Black.

27...f5

The only way to disrupt the position.

28 ♕e1?

28 ♕c3! f4 29 ♘g2! escaped my attention. The queen is well placed, since it can recapture on g3: 29...e3 30 ♘xf4! e2 31 ♕e1 and White coolly picks up the bishop.

28...♖f8?

28...f4! was much stronger when 29 ♘f5 is the move I was counting on, but in fact after 29...♕g6! 30 ♘xg7 ♗g4 31 ♘xe8 ♖xe8 it is Black who has the initiative. The rook on h1 is poorly placed and ...e3 looms.

29 ♘g2 f4!

Playing in the spirit of the position. Instead, 29...g5 is the move I was hoping to see, as then after 30 ♗b2! and ♕c3 Black's king will be in desperate trouble.

30 gxf4?

30 ♘xf4 ♖xf4 31 ♕e3! is certainly what I would have played, had I seen it (I did consider 31 ♗e3, but Black has at least a perpetual after 31...g5 32 gxf4 ♕h5). Following 31...♖f3 32 ♕xh6 gxh6 33 ♖xh3 and now, for example, 33...♖d3 34 ♗e3 ♖d1+ 35 ♔g2 ♖a1 the endgame is not hopeless for Black, but White is much better.

30...♖f5

White was threatening the simple 31 ♕e3.

31 ♕xe4 ♖h5 32 ♘e3

After all Black has rescued the bishop, but White has snatched two important pawns. The position remains very murky, and it seemed to me that all three results were on the table.

32...♖f8 33 ♗e5 ♗f5 34 ♖xh5 ♕xh5 35 ♕g2 ♖f7 36 c5

When in doubt, push the pawns!

36...h6 37 b4

I underestimated the simple option 37 ♘xf5 ♕xf5 38 c6 bxc6 39 dxc6 when only White can be better.

37...♗h3 38 ♕g3 ♗d7 39 f3 ♔h7 40 ♔f2?!

The instinct to leave the king on a dark square is strong, but it was better placed on g2 to prevent the upcoming queen incursion.

40...♕h1 41 ♕g1

41 f5? had been my intention, but after 41...♕c1! Black's counterplay lands first: 42 ♕g6+ ♔g8 43 ♘g4? is tempting, but there's 43...♗xf5! and the queen on c1 covers h6.

41...♕xg1+

41...♕h4+ would have given me an interesting choice between repeating with 42 ♕g3 and heading for a mess after 42 ♔e2 ♗b5+ 43 ♔d2.

42 ♔xg1 g5 43 ♘c2!

I was pleased with this idea during the game. It's worth expending tempi to get the knight and bishop properly coordinated.

43...gxf4 44 ♘d4 a6?!

44...♖e7 45 ♗xf4 ♖e1+ 46 ♔f2 ♖b1 47 c6 bxc6 48 dxc6 ♗c8 49 b5 would most likely end in a draw; Black has a much better version of the game.

45 c6 bxc6 46 dxc6 ♗c8 47 ♔f2?!

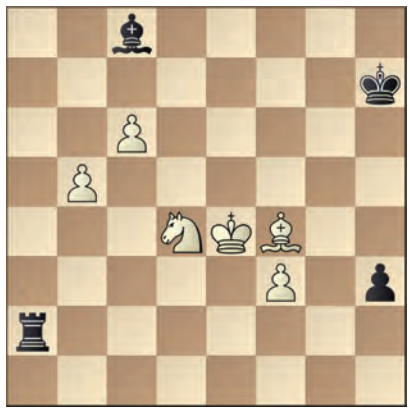
I was happy to stop ...♖e7-e1, and I mistakenly thought this was winning. Instead, 47 a4 was worth considering.

47...h5 48 a4 h4 49 b5 axb5 50 axb5 ♖a7 51 ♗xf4

51 b6 ♖a2+ 52 ♘e2 prevents ...♖b2, and was my intention when I played 47 ♔f2. Unfortunately, after 52...♗a6 53 b7 ♖xe2+ 54 ♔g1 ♖e1+! 55 ♔g2 ♖b1 56 b8♕ ♖xb8 57 ♗xb8 the endgame is drawn.

51...♖a2+ 52 ♔e3 h3 53 ♔e4

Luke McShane endured something of a topsy-turvy ride during the Netanya Masters, but did have fine wins against both Pavel Eljanov and the current world no.10 Leinier Dominguez Perez.



White still has decent practical chances here. In the worst case, advancing the pawn to b7 will force a draw, but before that happens Black has to play accurately.

53...h2 54 ♗xh2 ♖xh2 55 ♔d5 ♔g6 56 ♔c5!?

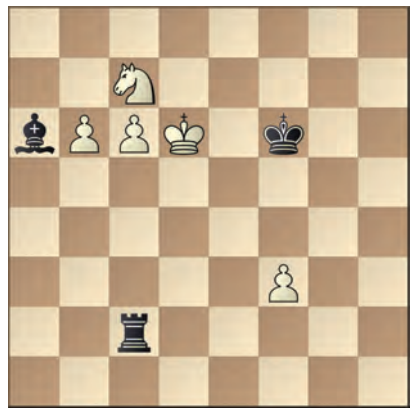
Alternatively, 56 ♔d6 ♖d2 57 ♔c7 ♖xd4 58 ♔xc8 ♖b4! secures the draw, while after 56 b6 ♖b2 57 ♔c5 ♗a6 White has nothing better than 58 b7. This is why I decided to play the king to c5 first.

56...♔f6? From a practical point of view, since we both had about a minute left plus increment, this was a big mistake, though the position is still drawn. 56...♖b2 was better, preparing to meet 57 b6 with 57...♗a6!.

57 b6 ♖b2

57...♗a6 58 ♘b3!? is tricky.

58 ♘b5 ♗a6 59 ♘c7 ♖c2+ 60 ♔d6



60...♖d2+?

The decisive mistake. 60...♖b2! hangs the bishop and doesn't even threaten ...♖xb6 (there is a fork on d5), but it was the only saving move. Try playing that with your flag hanging! 61 ♘xa6 ♖xb6 62 ♘c5 (62 ♘c7 also demands precision: 62...♔f5! 63 ♘d5 ♖a6! 64 ♘b4 ♖a8 draws) 62...♔f5 63 ♘d3 ♖b3! 64 ♘c5 ♖b6! with a repetition.

61 ♘d5+ ♔f5 62 b7 ♖b2 63 ♔c7

Threatening ♘b6.

63...♗xb7 64 cxb7 ♖c2+ 65 ♔d6 ♖b2 66 ♔c6 ♔e6 67 ♘c7+ 1-0

The knight comes to b5 to block the rook.

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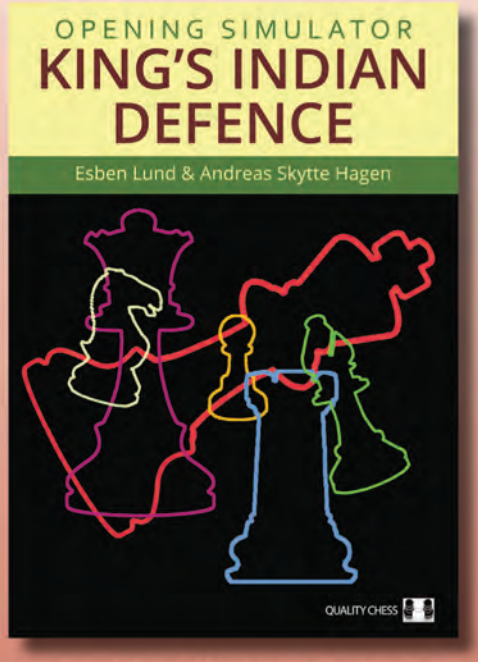

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Published early August

Opening Simulator – King's Indian Defence by Esben Lund & Andreas Skytte Hagen

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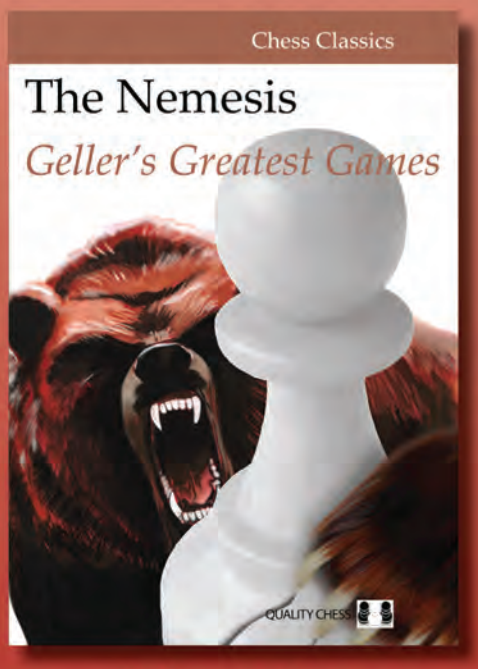

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The Nemesis – Geller's Greatest Games by Efim Geller

Efim Geller (1925-1998) was one of the giants of Soviet chess. He beat the World Champions more often than he lost, and had healthy plus scores over Bobby Fischer and Mikhail Botvinnik among others. So he deserves the nickname of **The Nemesis**. This book contains:

- Over 130 of Geller's greatest games, annotated by the man himself
- Many annotated games never before published in English

Geller never became World Champion but he won everything else – two Soviet titles and ten Olympiad gold medals are just a few of his accomplishments. Geller was also noted for his ability to share his wisdom – he coached World Champions Boris Spassky and Anatoly Karpov.

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Awesome Adams

Michael Adams finished powerfully and displayed his usual impressive pragmatism as he saw off David Howell at the British. Adams and Katarzyna Toma annotate

Michael Adams finished strongly as he outstayed David Howell to win his seventh British Championship. Adams is not quite the force he was when world no.4, but for now he still looks like Britain's strongest player. After 9 days in Torquay Adams was at his dominant best, but just like when he triumphed in Hull last year, his performance wasn't flawless. Again he arrived having not played for a couple of months and initially appeared a little rusty, not least in the opening round against the fast-moving, Devon IM Jack Rudd.

J.Rudd-M.Adams
Round 1
Giuoco Piano

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4

Adams would later twice face another fairly drawish variation, namely 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 d4 exd4 5 ♘xd4. After 5...♗b4 6 ♘xc6 bxc6 7 ♗d3 he tried 7...0-0 8 0-0 ♖e8!? 9 ♗g5 h6 10 ♗h4 ♗e7, which was playable, but also slightly better for White in Haria-Adams. As such, the main line 7...d5 8 exd5 cxd5 9 0-0 0-0 was preferred in the later Tan-Adams. Of course, both sides can play to win this unbalanced middlegame, but after 10 h3 ♖b8 11 ♕f3 d4 (11...♗b7 12 ♗g5 ♗e7 keeps pieces on) 12 ♘e4 ♘xe4 13 ♗xe4 ♗d6 14 ♖d1 ♖e8 the players elected to repeat with 15 ♗d5 ♗e6 16 ♗c6 ♗d7 17 ♗d5, etc.

3...♗c5 4 c3 ♘f6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 ♗b4+ 7 ♗d2

Jack Rudd can be a dangerous attacker, but here sets his stall out for a solid draw.

7...♘xe4

Allowing a fair degree of simplification, if also unbalancing the position. The alternative is 7...♗xd2+ 8 ♘bxd2 d5 9 exd5 ♘xd5 10 ♕b3 when many games have seen 10...♘a5 11 ♕a4+ ♘c6 12 ♕b3 and an early handshake, although Black can prefer 12...♘ce7 and hope to grind away, extremely solidly-placed though White is.

8 ♗xb4 ♘xb4 9 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 10 ♕b3+ d5 11 ♘e5+ ♔e6 12 ♕xb4 ♕f8 13 ♕xf8 ♖xf8 *(see diagram at top of next column)*

You may have seen this position before. Black does have the long-term advantage of bishop against knight, but White has a fine outpost on e5 and can aim to unsettle the advanced black king.

14 f3 ♘g5 15 0-0 ♔d6 16 ♘c3 c6 17 f4!?

This feels a little committal. 17 ♖fe1 ♗f5 18 ♖ad1 was a more solid approach when b2-b4 and/or ♘a4-c5 may follow.

17...♘e6 18 ♘e2 g6

18...b6!? 19 f5 ♘g5 20 ♘g3 c5 is the engine's bold preference, but assessing 21 h4 ♘f7 22 f6 g6 is no easy task, not least some way in advance.

19 ♖ac1 a5

Restraining any minority attack, but now Rudd is able to get going on the other flank.

20 ♖c3 a4 21 g4 ♖a7?

This prophylactic move turns out well, but Black should really have preferred to follow up the advance of the a-pawn with 21...♖a5! 22 ♖h3 ♖b5 when 23 b3 axb3 24 axb3 ♖b4 maintains a rough balance.

22 ♖h3 b6 23 f5! gxf5

Thus far Rudd has played very well, but he now loses the thread and misses a glorious opportunity. 24 ♖xf5 was preferable to the game continuation, although Black is slightly better after 24...♖xf5 25 gxf5 ♘xd4 26 ♘xd4 ♖g7+! 27 ♔f2 ♔xe5 28 ♘xc6+ ♔xf5. However, 24 ♖h6! would have created an awkward pin on the sixth rank, as well as another down the f-file. Following 24...♖g7 25 ♘g3! f4 26 ♔h1 Black would have been fighting for his life, seemingly have nothing better than the slightly desperate exchange sacrifice 26...♖g5! (26...♔c7 27 ♘f5 ♖gg8? 28 ♖xh7+ would be a complete nightmare for Black) 27 h4 ♖xe5 28 dxe5+ ♔xe5.

24 gxf5? ♖g7+ 25 ♔h1 ♖f6!

Cutting out ♖h6 ideas for good and now White's overextended central construction is about to collapse.

26 ♖c1 ♘xd4! 27 ♘xd4 ♔xe5 28 ♘xc6+ ♔d6 29 ♘d4 ♗xf5 30 ♘xf5+

Black's rooks take over after this, but 30 ♖c6+ ♔e7 31 ♘xf5+ ♖xf5 32 ♖c7+ ♔f6 33 ♖xg7 ♔xg7 34 ♔g2 ♔f6!? 35 ♖xh7 d4 may well just be lost too.

30...♖xf5 31 ♖h6+ ♖g6! 32 ♖xh7 ♖f2 33 ♖hc7 ♖gg2

Doubling on the seventh is rarely a bad idea and quickly gets the job done here.

34 ♖7c6+ ♔e5 35 ♖e1+ ♔f5 36 ♖ce6? ♖xh2+ 37 ♔g1 ♖fg2+ 38 ♔f1 ♖xb2 0-1

Adams proceeded to exploit an early mistake from IM John Pigott to win in only 26 moves for which he was rewarded, perhaps surprisingly, with a second White against Adam Ashton. After a small wobble, Adams would outmanoeuvre his FM opponent in trademark fashion, but he would concede his first half-point in the next round, offering a fairly early draw in a slightly worse position against young IM Ravi Haria.

Sensing that Adams was perhaps suffering from a summer cold and pleasantly surprised with how a type of Dragadorf had turned out, I did wonder if my early queenside attack might lead somewhere when facing the defending champion in round 5. We both missed a couple of small details, but in short Adams shored up a slightly shaky-looking king position, centralised his remaining forces and was quick to ruthlessly exploit my time-trouble collapse.

With David Howell held to his second draw of the event by Justin Tan, Adams found himself back on top board when it was his turn to face the Australian GM and former Edinburgh University student in round 6. Tan was in super-solid mode and Adams wisely allowed an early repetition to save some

energy for the 'money rounds', which would begin with the eagerly-awaited clash Howell versus Adams, with both on '+4'.

D.Howell-M.Adams
Round 7
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4

A surprise as Howell has generally been avoiding such potentially theoretical waters in recent years.

2...e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 ♕c2 d5 5 cxd5 exd5

Romanishin's 5...♕xd5 6 ♘f3 ♕f5 continues to hold up quite well for Black. Adams has been known to employ it, but despite being surprised decided to remain true to a recent favourite and trust his own analysis.

6 ♗g5 h6 7 ♗h4 0-0

The sensible choice, although the razor-sharp 7...c5 8 dxc5 g5 9 ♗g3 ♘e4 has been seen much more often.

8 e3 c5 9 dxc5 ♗e6 10 ♘f3 ♘bd7 11 ♗e2 ♖c8

12 c6

Very similar play arose after 12 ♘d4 ♘xc5 13 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 14 0-0 ♘d7! (to saddle White with his own isolated pawns) 15 ♕a4 ♗xc3 16 bxc3 a6 17 ♕b4 ♖c7 18 a4 ♖fc8, which was rock-solid for Black who went on to triumph in Dreev-Adams, Bilbao 2014.

12...♖xc6!?

Adams had earlier preferred 12...bxc6 13 0-0 ♕a5 against Shirov in the same European Club Cup as he faced Dreev, but he may have been unable to find an equaliser against Vidit's 14 ♘d4.

13 ♘d4 ♖c8

Black loses some time, but once again will saddle White with a weak pawn on c3.

14 0-0 ♕e7 15 ♕b3 ♗xc3 16 bxc3 ♘c5 17 ♗xf6

This exchange likely needed to be made at some point and does avoid the possibility of 17 ♕a3 g5!? (Black can also sit tight with 17...a6) 18 ♗g3 ♘fe4 19 ♕xa7 ♘xc3 20 ♕a3 ♘xe2+ 21 ♘xe2, when White might be slightly better, but a draw is the most likely result.

17...♕xf6 18 ♕b4 b6!?

Black can allow White to probe with this, but there was also 18...a6 19 a4 ♖c7, as per Dreev-Adams.

19 a4 ♕g6! 20 a5 ♘e4

Michael Adams is now a seven-time British Champion, . The Cornishman gradually ran into top gear in Torquay, finishing with a powerful sprint to the line as he demonstrates below.

Activating just in the nick of time. Howell's next gives up any hope of being better, but in any case Black seems to be fine, as shown by 21 axb6 (21 ♖fc1 ♕f6 22 ♗f3 ♖c4 also maintains a rough balance) 21...♗h3 22 ♗f3 axb6 23 ♔h1 ♗f5 24 ♖a6 ♖b8 when White can go a pawn up with 25 ♘xf5 ♕xf5 26 ♗xe4 ♕xe4 27 ♖xb6, but it won't last long after 27...♖xb6 28 ♕xb6 ♕d3 29 ♖c1 ♕d2.

21 ♘xe6 ♕xe6 ½-½

At this stage it appeared that a third British Championship in a row might yet end with a rapid play-off, but Howell was to be frustrated by Ravi Haria in round 8, whereas Adams made the most of finishing with two whites as he brutally claimed the £5,000 first prize, along with £1,500 for the English Championship.

Notes by Michael Adams

M.Adams-R.Pert
Round 8
Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6

I wasn't really expecting this, but had decided to try the Advance Caro where my opponent didn't have extensive experience.

2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5

It's always seemed surprising to me that Black can get away with this cheeky move, but it has now become a very serious line.

4 ♘f3 ♘c6 5 c4 cxd4 6 ♘xd4 e6 7 ♘c3

♗c5 8 ♘xc6 bxc6

White has a few options here, but I was attracted to an idea of Wesley So's, heading for quick development.

9 ♗e2 ♘e7 10 0-0 ♘g6 11 ♘a4 ♗e7

11...♗b6!? is also worth considering.

12 f4 0-0 13 ♗e3 f6 14 exf6 ♗xf6 15 ♗d3!

Moving the bishop again to eye the knight on g6.

15...d4?

All White's minor pieces are well placed and the c5-square is a tempting spot for the knight to aim for. Fixing the structure doesn't work well here; the pawn on d4 will impede Black's best piece, the bishop on f6. Better were 15...♖e8 or 15...e5, as played by David Navara against Wesley So.

16 ♗d2 e5 17 ♕h5!

Richard's plan was 17 f5?! ♘f4!, and if 18 ♗xf4 (or 18 ♗e4 ♗g5) 18...exf4 19 ♖xf4 ♗g5 when Black gets active, but the queen move paralyses the knight on g6, consolidating a large advantage for White.

17...exf4 18 ♗xf4 ♕d7

18...♗e6!? 19 ♘c5 ♗f7 20 ♘e4 is also tough for Black, as shown by 20...♗e7 21 ♗d6! ♗xd6? 22 ♘g5 and wins.

19 h3

Not 19 ♘c5? ♕g4!, releasing the pressure.

19...♕f7 20 ♘c5 ♗e7?

A mistake in a bad position. Unsurprisingly allowing a discovered attack doesn't work out well. After 20...♗e6 I was intending 21 b3 ♖fe8, but I didn't realise at the board that the classy continuation 22 ♖ae1! (if 22 ♘e4 ♘e5!) 22...♘f8 23 ♕d1 with ♘e4 to follow is the best way forward.

21 ♗d6! ♕e8

Giving up the queen is also hopeless: 21...♕xf1+ 22 ♖xf1 ♖xf1+ 23 ♔xf1 ♗xd6 24 ♗xg6 hxg6 25 ♕xg6 ♗xc5 26 ♕xc6, etc.

22 ♖fe1

A deadly pin.

22...♖f7

22...♗xd6 23 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 24 ♗xg6 hxg6 25 ♕xg6 is crushing.

23 ♗xg6 hxg6 24 ♕e5!

Avoiding the game-changing blunder 24 ♕xg6? ♖f1+, winning White's queen.

24...♔f8

After 24...d3 25 ♗xe7 d2 26 ♖e2 the d-pawn isn't threatening.

25 ♕xd4 ♔g8

Both 25...♕d8 26 ♗xe7+ and 25...a5 26 ♕h4! are crushing.

26 ♕e5 ♔f8 27 ♖e3 a5

27...♕d8 is refuted by 28 ♖ae1 ♕xd6 29 ♕xd6 ♗xd6 30 ♖e8 mate.

28 ♖ae1 ♖a7 29 ♕g5!

Now 29...♗f5 30 ♕h4! would deal the fatal blow.

29...♕d8 30 ♕h4!

A pleasing way to exploit the multiple pins.

30...♔e8

There is no defence: 30...♕xd6 31 ♕h8 mate or 30...♔g8 31 ♗xe7 ♕d2 32 ♗g5, menacing ♖e8+.

31 ♗xe7 1-0

Black resigned, due to 31...♖axe7 32 ♕h8+!.

The Riviera International Centre once again supplied a spacious setting for the British.

I didn't feel I had much luck with the pairings earlier, but another white game in the last round was very handy.

M.Adams-S.Gordon
Round 9
Sicilian Moscow

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 ♗b5+ ♘d7 4 ♗a4

The latest fashion. This is quite a clever idea, keeping options of c2-c3 or c2-c4 depending on Black's response.

4...♘gf6 5 0-0 a6

The point is that 5...♘xe4 6 ♖e1 ♘ef6 7 d4 is very dangerous, so White doesn't have to defend the pawn immediately.

6 c4

6...e5

6...♘xe4 7 ♖e1 ♘ef6 8 d4 is still not easy, and 8...e6 9 d5! e5 10 ♘xe5! shows one of the attacking concepts. Stephen's move fixes the centre, but White has the clearer plan to begin play on the b-file.

7 d3 g6

After 7...♗e7, 8 ♘h4!? is possible when 8...g6 (I think Black's best bet is to jettison a pawn for active play: 8...0-0!? 9 ♘f5 b5 10 cxb5 ♘b6) 9 ♘c3 (maybe 9 ♗h6!? ♘g8 10 ♗g7 ♗xh4 11 ♗xh8) 9...0-0 10 ♗h6 ♖e8 11 h3 looks pleasant for White.

8 ♘c3 ♗g7 9 ♖b1 0-0 10 h3

I thought it important to deny the bishop the g4-square and prepare ♗e3 (10 ♗e3?! ♘g4 helps Black to push ...f5), but 10 b4 cxb4 11 ♖xb4 ♘c5 12 h3 was another way of doing it.

10...♘e8

A natural way to prepare ...f5, but it will cost more time when the knight returns to the action. In fact the knight will now be stuck on the back rank until the last move of the game.

11 b4

I wasn't that convinced by 11 ♗g5 f6 12 ♗e3 f5 and 11 ♘d5 is well met by 11...♘c7.

11...cxb4 12 ♖xb4 ♘c5 13 ♘d5

I wanted to play 13 ♗e3, but thought it impossible due to 13...♕a5 14 ♕b1 ♘xd3. However, after 15 ♕xd3! ♕xb4 16 ♖b1 Black's queen is snared: 16...♕a5 17 ♗b6 or 16...♕a3 17 ♖b3.

13...b5?

This is tactically flawed, but I was happy with my position after the better options too:

a) 13...♗e6 14 ♘b6 ♖b8 15 ♗c2 f5 16 exf5 ♗xf5 17 ♗e3 with d3-d4 to follow looks good.

b) 13...♘c7 14 ♘b6 ♖b8 15 ♗g5 f6 16 ♗e3 f5 17 ♘xc8 ♕xc8 18 exf5 gxf5 19 ♖b6 and Black's position looks a bit loose.

14 cxb5 ♗d7

After 14...axb5 15 ♗xb5 ♖xa2 16 ♗g5 Black's undefended rook on a2 is vulnerable, and if 16...f6 (or 16...♕a5 17 ♗c4) 17 ♗c4 fxg5 18 ♗xa2 ♔h8 19 ♖b8.

15 b6!

A deadly idea. The passed pawn is not only close to queening, but it also paralyses the knight on e8.

15...♘xa4

Throwing in 15...a5 doesn't change much, as shown by 16 ♖c4 ♘xa4 17 ♖xa4 ♗xa4 18 ♕xa4 h6 19 ♗e3 f5 20 b7 ♖b8 21 ♗b6.

16 ♖xa4 ♗xa4 17 ♕xa4 f6

17...h6 18 ♗e3 f5 19 b7 ♖b8 20 ♗b6! leaves the black queen embarrassed.

18 ♘d2

18 ♗e3!? ♖f7 19 ♘d2 was also good.

18...♖f7 19 ♘c4 ♕d7

Swapping queens is hardly desirable, but 19...f5 20 ♘a5 is no fun either.

20 ♕xd7 ♖xd7 21 ♗e3 f5 22 f3 ♗f6

The natural 22...♘f6 is refuted by direct play: 23 ♖b1 ♘xd5 24 exd5 ♗f6 (or 24...e4 25 dxe4 fxe4 26 fxe4 ♗c3 27 ♖b3) 25 b7 ♖b8 26 ♘a5 ♗d8 27 ♗a7 and wins.

23 ♖b1 ♗d8 24 ♘a5 ♖b8

Or if 24...♔f7 25 b7 ♖b8 26 ♗a7.

25 ♘c6

25...♖bb7

25...♖c8 26 b7 ♖xb7 27 ♖xb7 ♖xc6 28 ♖b8 picks up a piece.

26 ♘a5 ♖b8 27 ♘c6 ♖bb7 28 a4 ♔f7

Also quite lost is 28...♘f6 29 ♘xd8 ♘xd5 30 ♘xb7 ♘xe3 31 ♘a5.

29 a5 ♘f6 30 ♘db4 1-0

Stronger than 30 ♘xd8+ ♖xd8 31 ♗g5 ♘xd5 32 ♗xd8 ♘f4 which gives a few practical hopes. Black resigned here, as after 30...♔e6 31 ♘xa6 White plans ♘ab8, or if 30...d5 31 ♘xe5+.

* * * * * * * * *

David Howell may not enjoy the best of head-to-head records with Adams, but the top seed pushed him all the way in an attempt to win his third outright British title in the English Riviera alone. While Adams generally oozes professionalism, Howell's games are more likely to have the crowd gripped. He generally uses all of his time and often even relies on the increment alone for several moves. The Sussex star has a pretty impressive all-round game, but is not immune from being drawn into a hand-to-hand duel, as we'll see later in these pages.

While it was hard to argue that Michael Adams wasn't a highly worthy British Champion, things might have been different had David Howell also not had Black against Justin Tan and Ravi Haria, who both emerged with highly creditable draws. The former defended like a lion from move 40 to peace being signed on move 61; the latter remained impressively solid for some 89 moves. Winning as Black really can be a very tough business.

Howell must have been dismayed to see Adams' fine exchange sacrifice in the final round, but impressively still remained knuckled down to business against Keith Arkell, winning the game not once but twice after allowing Black's counterplay to get out of control just before the time control. His reward was clear second with a hardly shabby 7/9.

Third place was shared between your scribe and Ravi Haria. The rising Hertfordshire star began with 3/3 and only found Simon Williams' Colle-Zukertort too hot to handle (see this month's reviews), while scoring highly creditable draws against Adams and Howell. That said, it might well have been John Emms, not Haria, finishing on '+4'.

J.Emms-R.Haria
Round 9
French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♗d7 5 ♘f3 ♗c6 6 ♗d3 ♘d7 7 c3 ♗e7 8 0-0 ♘gf6 9 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 10 ♖e1 0-0 11 ♗f4 ♗xf3 12 ♕xf3 c6 13 ♖e3 g6 14 ♕g3 ♖e8 15 ♖ae1 a5 16 a4

Thus far White has nothing more than the edge usually afforded him by Black's solid choice of the Fort Knox variation. Now 16...♗h4!? 17 ♕g4 h5 might have been sensible to discombobulate, whereas Haria's choice was but to encourage White in his attacking ambitions.

16...♕b6? 17 h4! ♗g7 18 h5 ♕b3

John Emms is generally a positive character, but at the prize-giving must still have been wondering how he didn't win his last game..

Not what Black wanted to do, of course, but White would have enjoyed an overwhelming initiative after 18...♕xb2? 19 hxg6 hxg6 20 ♖b1 ♕a2 21 ♖xb7.

19 ♕h4 ♗f6 20 ♕g4 ♗g7 21 hxg6 hxg6 22 ♖h3 e5!?

In dire straits Haria desperately tries to mix things up.

23 dxe5

23 ♕xd7! ♖ed8 24 ♕g4 would actually have been very strong in view of 24...exf4 25 ♗xg6! fxg6 26 ♕xg6. The killer threat is 27 ♖e7 and 26...♔f8 (or 26...♕f7 27 ♖h8+!) 27 ♖h5 ♖d5 28 ♖h7 ♖d7 29 ♖e5! is totally hopeless for Black.

23...♘f8 24 ♕h4 ♕xa4 25 b3! ♕xb3 26 ♗h6 ♖xe5 27 ♗xg7 ♖h5 28 ♕f6

Even cleaner would have been 28 ♕f4 ♖xh3 29 gxh3 ♔xg7 30 ♗c4.

28...♘h7

29 ♕e7??

A horrible miscalculation as time-trouble began to bite. Correct was 29 ♕f4 ♖xh3 (29...♔xg7 30 ♗c4 ♕c2 31 ♕xf7+ ♔h8 32 ♖he3 is overwhelming too) 30 ♗c4! with the twin threats of mate and 31 ♗xb3.

29...♖xh3 30 gxh3 ♔xg7 31 ♗xg6 ♘f6

Even 31...♔xg6 32 ♖e3 ♔g7 would have worked, but in any case White is about to come up painfully short.

32 ♗c2 ♕xc2 33 ♔h1 ♕f5 34 ♖g1+ ♔h8 35 ♕e3 ♕e4+ 0-1

The organisation of this year's British from Kevin Staveley and his team was rightly praised, but we must hope that they will now look to build on a third highly successful Championships in a row by securing a new sponsor. Unlike Llandudno and Hull, Torquay was not sponsored, meaning that the first prize fell from £10,000 to £5,000 and only after a little money for conditions was found from an ECF budget were the Championships able to attract Adams and Howell.

With next year's Olympiad scheduled to take place from August 1-15 there appears to be a possibility that the British will revert back to a two-week format; the Championship being held over the first week, with the many junior championships in the second. That might just work, but could backfire if a lack of sponsorship fails to attract the leading British players. And let us just hope that no grandmaster will ever again walk into the Congress Office and fail to be recognised by a leading force in the organising team, as remarkably occurred after the final round this year.

We must also hope that our leading women will continue to play the British. In Torquay Jovanka Houska secured her ninth British Women's title, a remarkable achievement and one more outright championship than Rowena Bruce managed (although she also tied for first in a further three). Houska gave the impression of having worked hard on her game of late. She was typically professional, as when holding Nick Pert with the black pieces, which is never an easy task, and performed defensive miracles when somehow holding a piece-down, wild middlegame with both kings highly exposed against Simon Williams no less.

Houska's fine positional intuition has long been a major strength, but en route to finishing on '+3' for a 2487 performance she also showed that she can attack with verve when given the chance. So too can Katarzyna Toma, who will make her debut for England in the European Team Championships this autumn and who finished second in the British Women's Championship, while winning the game of the tournament.

R.Bates-J.Houska
Round 3
Semi-Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♗d3 ♘bd7 6 0-0 ♗d6 7 ♘c3

Acquiescing to a transposition into a sharp line of the Meran.

7...dxc4 8 ♗xc4 b5 9 ♗d3 ♗b7 10 e4 e5

An essential central reaction as the battle already heats up.

11 dxe5 ♘xe5 12 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 13 f4

Critical, but White may do well to delay the advance, such as in favour of 13 ♕e2.

13...♗d4+

13...♗c7? 14 e5 ♘g4 15 ♕xg4 ♕xd3 16 ♖d1 was superb for White in Kasparov-Short, Reykjavik (rapid) 2004, although somehow Short eventually saved the game.

14 ♔h1 h5!

A thematic idea in such positions, exploiting Black's control of the g1-a7 diagonal.

15 e5 ♘g4 16 ♘e4 ♕h4 17 h3 c5

Threatening 18...♗xe4 19 ♗xe3 ♕g3!. 17...0-0-0 18 ♗d2 c5 also turned out well for Black in Thompson-Pein, 4NCL 2013.

18 ♗xb5+

18 ♕e1? would but be meek and leave White suffering after 18...♕xe1 19 ♖xe1 0-0-0.

18...♔f8 19 ♕f3

Wisely covering some key squares and preparing to defend with 20 ♕g3.

19...♗xe4 20 ♕xe4 ♖b8

Black had to avoid 20...♕g3?? 21 ♕xa8+ ♔e7 22 ♕b7+! ♔f8 23 ♕b8+ ♔e7 24 ♕d6#, but 20...♖d8 was also possible.

21 ♕d5?

A bad miscalculation, whereas 21 ♕f3! ♘f2+ 22 ♔h2 would have led to a draw. Possibly Bates was rather concerned about 22...♖xb5, but after 23 ♕a8+ ♔e7 24 ♕xa7+ ♔d8 25 ♗d2 Black's king is also in trouble and it transpires that White has counterplay sufficient for a draw, as with 25...♘g4+ 26 ♔h1 ♖h6 27 ♗a5+ ♔e8 28 ♕a8+ ♔d7 29 ♕a7+ when 29...♔e6? 30 f5+! ♔xe5 31 ♖ae1+ ♘e3 32 ♗d2 would be most inadvisable.

21...♕g3!

The rook on b8 can be allowed to fall with check as Houska completes a textbook attacking combination.

22 ♕d6+ ♔g8 23 ♕xb8+ ♔h7 0-1

The move White must have initially missed is 24 ♗d3+ g6 25 ♗xg6+ ♔g7! when he will either be mated on h2 or by 26 hxg4 ♕h4#.

Notes by Katarzyna Toma

K.Toma-K.Arkell
Round 5
Modern Defence

1 e4 g6 2 d4 ♗g7 3 ♘c3 c6 4 ♘f3 d5

There is also a plan with 4...b5?!, but Black shouldn't play with the pawns on the queenside when behind in development, as demonstrated by Malakhov-S.Novikov, Moscow (blitz) 2015: 5 ♗d3 d6 6 h3 ♘d7 7 0-0 ♕c7 8 ♖e1 ♗b7 9 ♗g5 e5 10 d5 b4 11 dxc6 ♗xc6 12 ♘d5 ♗xd5 13 exd5 ♘gf6 14 ♗b5 and White had instructively taken control.

5 h3 dxe4 6 ♘xe4 ♘d7 7 ♗d3

Another possibility in this Modern and Caro-Kann hybrid is 7 ♗c4 ♘gf6 8 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♖e1 ♗f5 11 ♗f4 ♗e4 12 ♗e5 ♗d5 13 ♗f1, after which White beautifully outplayed Black in Kryvoruchko-V.Onischuk, Ukrainian Championship, Kharkov 2007.

7...♘gf6 8 c3 0-0 9 0-0 b6

A bit too slow. It was more natural to play 9...♘xe4 10 ♗xe4 c5 11 ♗e3 and although White might be slightly better, Black has a normal, playable position.

10 ♘eg5!? h6?

Black had no sense of danger that day, although even after 10...♗b7 11 ♘e5 e6 12 ♕e2 White has more space and the more enjoyable position.

11 ♘xf7!

My coach Marcin Tazbir showed me this idea in a similar position without h3 and ...b6 included. I was told the best reply is ...♖xf7 as ...♔xf7 falls under a strong attack after ♘h4.

11...♔xf7

After 11...♖xf7!? 12 ♗xg6 ♕f8 13 ♘h4 ♘d5 14 ♕d3 ♘7f6 15 c4 White enjoys ongoing, promising compensation.

12 ♘h4 g5 13 ♘g6

Black's position is already very tough.

13...♖e8

Not much better is 13...♗a6 14 ♘xf8 ♗xd3 15 ♘xd7 ♗xf1 16 ♘e5+, while after 13...♗b7 14 f4 c5 15 fxg5 hxg5 16 ♗xg5 White's pieces surround Black's king so smoothly that there is no need to regain the exchange at the cost of the initiative.

14 ♘e5+

14 f4 was probably more accurate, avoiding any piece exchanges for the time being. After 14...gxf4 15 ♗xf4 e6 (or 15...♗b7 16 ♕d2) 16 ♘e5+ Black is forced to exchange as otherwise his queen is trapped, but he is still in serious trouble after 16...♘xe5 17 dxe5 ♔g8 18 exf6 ♕xf6 19 ♕h5 ♗d7 20 ♗g6.

14...♔g8

14...♘xe5 15 dxe5 ♘d5 was the alternative, but after 16 ♕h5+ ♔g8 17 f4 White is still doing extremely well:

a) 17...g4 18 f5 with the idea of playing ♗h6.

b) 17...e6 18 fxg5 ♖f8 19 ♖xf8+ ♕xf8 20 gxh6 breaks through.

c) 17...♖f8 18 fxg5 ♖xf1+ 19 ♗xf1 hxg5 (or 19...♗xe5 20 ♗d3) 20 ♗d3 when ♗g5 and ♖f1 are coming.

d) 17...♘xf4 18 ♗xf4 gxf4 19 ♕g6 and wins.

15 f4!

Allowing the rook and dark-squared bishop to join in the attack.

15...gxf4 16 ♗xf4

Now ♘c6 is again threatened.

16...♘xe5 17 dxe5 ♘d5

White is also winning after 17...♗e6 18 exf6 exf6 19 ♕f3 ♕d7 20 ♖ad1, so the best chance for Black was 17...♕d5 18 exf6 exf6 19 ♕c2 when he is still alive and can put up some resistance.

18 ♗xh6!

I was smiling inside when I found this move.

18...♗xh6 19 ♕h5 ♘f4 20 ♖xf4 ♕xd3 21 ♕xe8+ ♔h7 22 ♕xe7+ ♔g8

Suddenly, I couldn't find checkmates anymore and no longer felt so cold blooded! Here 23 ♕e8+ ♔h7 24 ♖f7+ ♗g7 25 ♖af1 ♗xh3 26 ♕e7 ♕g3 27 ♖xg7+ ♕xg7 28 ♖f7 was the easiest and fastest way of winning.

Jovanka Houska receives her now almost customary British Women's Championship trophy from ECF Director of Home Chess, Adrian Elwin. Houska was at her very best in Torquay.

23 ♕f7+ ♔h8 24 ♖f3 ♕d7 25 ♕g6 ♕g7 26 ♕e8+ ♕g8 27 ♕xc6 ♗e6

White is still winning, but has allowed Black to develop his pieces, so I was annoyed at myself for ruining my hard work. It took me a moment to clear my thoughts and, thankfully, I then came up with the deadly plan of ♖d1-d4-h4.

28 ♖d1 ♖e8 29 ♖d4! ♖e7 30 ♖h4 ♕g5 31 ♕a8+ ♔h7 32 ♕e4+ ♔g8 33 ♔h2 ♖g7 34 ♖f6 ♕g3+ 35 ♔h1 1-0

***Leading scores*:**

1	Michael Adams	7½/9
2	David Howell	7
3-4	Ravia Haria, Richard Palliser	6½
5-7	Stephen Gordon, Justin Tan, Jovanka Houska	6
8-15	John Emms, Keith Arkell, Matthew Wadsworth, David Eggleston, Jonah Willow, Neil Bradbury, Borna Derakhshani, Charlie Storey	5½

Never Mind the Grandmasters...

Here come the amateurs - by Carl Portman (carl.portman@hotmail.co.uk)

The British Chess Championships. They generate images of chess players in shorts (maybe not), sunny days and lots of lovely chess. This year Torquay hosted the finals once again. I played in the Atkins weekender, as I was not able to take a week away to play in a different competition. I was ranked in the lower third of the tournament, but expected to finish on at least 50%. That simply never happened, but I shall come to that presently.

First of all to the venue. I am a fan of the Riviera Centre, as were all of the chess players I spoke to who commented on it. It has all the elements required for summer chess, including air-conditioning, ample playing space, good refreshments, plenty of room for the bookstall and analysis areas, as well as other things to do whilst you stay, including swimming and a gym. Additionally, the organisers arranged events for people to enjoy: a film night, problem-solving tournament, pub walk, simultaneous (thanks to Jack Rudd), pitch 'n' putt, a quiz, and more. There really was something for everyone.

The organisation from el supremo Kevin Staveley and his team was excellent, as ever. The ECF worked with the Devon County Chess Association and I tweeted at the time how impressive it all was. If I may, I would add a thought about events like this. I wonder if there would be any mileage in trying to make better (any) use of public galleries to try to tempt the locals to step in and taste just a flavour of our great game. They would surely be mightily impressed at the age range and number of people playing – and might just feel like trying the game themselves. We just have to get 'em through the door.

Torquay is known as the English Riviera with good reason. Replete with palm trees and exotic plants, I could easily imagine that I was abroad. I do hope that the Championships will return there again in my lifetime.

In this agreeable chess environment, one could observe young and old alike (and those who consider themselves somewhere 'twixt the two) enjoying their chess. Where else can you see youngsters engaged in sporting competition with the Dumbledores of this world? That's the magic of it, right there.

There was though one issue which was out of the organisers' control that I noticed. I would like to see more female participants in the Championship itself to challenge our now nine-time champion, Jovanka Houska. That said, it was good to see the ever-improving Nadia Jaufarally playing and I remember her from a couple of majors I played in. She is accelerating at a steady pace and this will have been great experience for her. There's much more to come and I for one would love to see her challenging for the female title in the future.

Abbey Gardens, Torquay lie between the home of the British, the Riviera Centre, and the sea.

I want to make a few brief comments regarding a couple of my own battles. First of all, I was hoping that I might be able to employ a little medieval philosophy in my game. Adjacent to the playing venue is Torre Abbey, a lasting testament to 800 years of English history.

Torre Abbey has served as a medieval monastery, family home and historic building in its own right. Inside the under croft there is some informative wording as part of a display. It reads: "The medieval church taught that after death you entered a terrifying place called Purgatory. There, you suffered until cleansed of your sins. But you could reduce your time by performing a penance – an unselfish act to show you were sorry for your misdeeds. One such penance was to give money to a monastery like Torre Abbey."

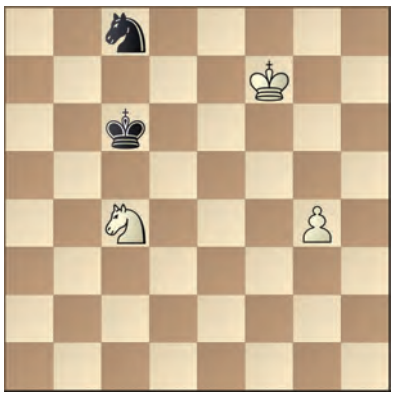
By 1200, monasteries owned one sixth of the land in England. No surprise there about money cleansing people, but I wondered at that moment if I would find my own purgatory in the tournament. I waited until the last round to find out and it was pretty sordid. I reached a clearly better position against Alice Lampard. I was White and my first opportunity came here.

Despite all the huffing and puffing I could not figure out how to blow the door down. Here, I should have played my rook to g3. I knew that, I saw it, and I was going to play it, but I made the oft-frequent error of waiting (wasting!) just one move before I executed the strongest try. The gates of my own purgatory were yawning for me as I sat there.

Then came one of the most ridiculous mistakes I think I have ever made in chess. Eric Morecambe once famously commented about playing all the right notes but in the wrong order, and I decided to apply that advice to the chessboard. I had several options and got completely carried away. In the position below my head was full of moves. To break in and secure the full point I thought that I could just instruct the bishop to take on h6, but I had to wait for that moment.

Sadly I didn't. I reached out and my hand suddenly contained a bishop which moved swiftly to the c1-square and as I let go of the sorry prelate, I immediately saw Black's reply which was, of course, knight takes pawn on e5. It forks the queen and rook, and wins immediately. Alice wasted no time in executing the move, probably astonished at her good fortune. I have no idea why I played 20 ♗c1 at this moment. I had carefully nurtured this position from the original opening, my favourite 1 ♘f3 and 2 b3 line, and it had all gone to plan. Alice was very nice about it afterwards, but I felt sick to the pit of my stomach; not for losing, but for the way in which I lost and had finished my tournament. This game then was my own purgatory and no amount of money donated to a monastery could mitigate the pain or the guilt.

However, on to more pleasant memories and my second-round draw with Graham Bolt. It was a mammoth game consisting of almost 100 moves and lasted four and a half hours. We were the last two players to finish in the main playing hall and the game was on the live boards with plenty of spectators watching. I had a knight and king against my opponent's knight, king and pawn. I am trying to draw; he is trying to win.

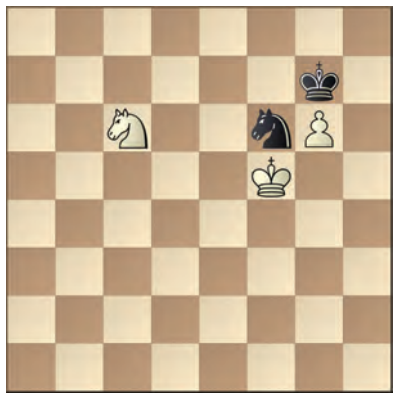


Such an endgame is tricky for both sides and it takes some thinking about. One has to consider all the key squares that these devilish knights might jump to. I actually blundered with **78...♔d5** and the engines now show that White wins if he pushes the g-pawn next, but Graham played **79 ♘d2**. That was my good fortune and after **79...♔e5** the draw was thankfully back on the cards.

My task clearly is to remove the pawn for my knight and secure a draw, but there are a few issues. One has to have an appreciation about certain endgames – chess is not all about openings. I knew that in some circumstances the knight had to 'go away' from the action before it came back, as well as that in some lines I could allow the pawn to promote to a queen as long as I then had a free knight check forking her and the king. The problem was that Graham had a knight of his own which was proving to be a real pest. I blotted out the live board and the people watching to give the game my complete focus.

Carl may have hoped to learn about attack, but his visit to Torre Abbey reminded him instead of purgatory. Having placed his bishop on b2, not g5, he unfortunately opted for hell over heaven.

We played on for quite a few moves and then arrived at this position, with little time left each:



It wasn't too difficult to work out that ...♘h7 and then ...♘f8 means I can take the pawn on g6 and draw. There's no way for White to stop it. Therefore I played **95...♘h7** and we drew after **96 ♘d4 ♘f8 97 ♘e6+**.

I was pleased to hold this game against a stronger player and not look too daft in front of the online audience. I think having their live games shown across the world is something that the top players learn to deal with. I mean, how often is your day job beamed across the world live for all to scrutinise? Newsreaders do perhaps, but chess players are constantly under that sort of pressure too. I take my hat off to them.

I enjoyed watching the Championship games too and the one that really drove home how difficult chess is was actually played by our Editor against David Howell. I sauntered past the spectator area at one point and saw this...

Richard has just played 18 ♘c6. It looks like someone has liberally thrown the pieces at the board and they landed where they may. I could not make head nor tail of it. I put this position into my chess engine (*Komodo 13*), and incredibly it shows '0.00'. Imagine that. This position is dead level. I am certain that both players knew that [*Ed. – possibly*], but many of us patzers watching would not have had a clue. What a rich game chess is. Credit to both chaps who eventually fought a great battle to a draw.

Chess is a lonely game at times, especially when languishing in purgatory, but it also provides many opportunities to make new friends, which I did. One gentleman shares my good taste in rock music, whilst another has invited me to speak about chess in prisons at some point. I might have to make it a week-long event of it next year.

My one amusing anecdote from the Championships is this. I was enjoying an evening meal with my friend Jovanka Houska and her husband Arne, accompanied by the excellent chess player and lovely person that is Katarzyna Toma. At one point Jovi came out with one of her 'Joviisms', as I like to call them. She was telling Katarzyna about my two dogs, and at some point turned to me and said, "What make are they?". We all collapsed laughing. Jovanka won't mind me saying that at that moment, I think the pain of my loss dissolved and I ascended from purgatory.

A Three-Way Go

Terry Chapman reports from the British Over-50 Championship

Mark Josse, Oliver Jackson and I each scored 5½/7 in the Over-50's in Torquay, sharing the title.

Three of the four highest-rated players failed to win in round one. Was the going going to be tough? Not for Mark who quickly took the sole lead, and kept it through to round six. His defeat of Russell Granat looked particularly impressive:

M.Josse-R.Granat
Round 4
Queen's Gambit Declined

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♗g5 ♘bd7 6 e3 c6 7 ♗d3 h6 8 ♗h4 ♗e7 9 ♕c2 0-0 10 ♘ge2 ♖e8 11 0-0 ♘f8 12 f3 c5 13 ♖ad1 c4 14 ♗f5 ♗xf5 15 ♕xf5 ♕d7 16 ♕c2 b5 17 a3 ♘8h7 18 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 19 e4 dxe4 20 fxe4

Very much the sort of position White is aiming for in this line.

20...♗d8?! 21 ♘g3 ♗a5?!

22 ♖xf6!

Crushing in all lines.

22...♗xc3

22...gxf6 23 ♘d5 (the computer likes 23 ♘f5 ♖e6 24 ♕e2 even more) 23...♖e6 24 ♘f5 is pure joy for the knights.

23 ♕xc3 gxf6 24 ♘f5 ♔h7 25 ♕h3 1-0

True, Stephen Homer missed a nice chance to slow him down along the way:

S.Homer-M.Josse
Round 3

26 ♗g5?

I'm sure Stephen would like to have this position again, as there is 26 ♗h6!! and if 26...♖xh6 27 ♖f1+.

26...♖f7 27 ♗h6 ♗xh6 28 ♕xh6+ ♔e7 29 ♖g6 ♕xc4 30 ♖xd6 ♕f1+ 0-1

Meanwhile Oliver Jackson began accumulating back to back wins after two early draws, and I also managed to stay within a half point, bringing home the win in two close, inaccurate endgames. Then in round 6, to my eye, sitting next to the game, comfortably in control, this happened to Mark:

M.Josse-O.Jackson
Round 6

Can chess make you happy? The answer appears to be yes based on a beaming Mark Josse (second left). Terry Chapman (left) also enjoyed a fine tournament and Oliver Jackson (right) could be proud of his finish. The trio are pictured with the City of Hull trophy and Adrian Elwin.

21 ♔h1?

"I'm not sure why I didn't play 21 ♘d4 as originally intended," Mark lamented afterwards. Following 21...♖bc8 22 ♖c5 ♗d7 or 22...♗g4 23 ♖dc1 ♗d7 24 ♕c3 ♘f5 25 ♘xf5 ♕xf5 26 ♖a5 White retains a clear advantage.

21...♗g4 22 ♖e1?

After 22 ♖xc6! and if 22...♗f3? 23 gxf3 ♘xf3 24 ♕xd5 Black could resign.

22...♘f3!

A very nasty tactic.

23 ♕a5 ♘xe1 24 ♖xe1 ♗xe2 25 ♗xe2 ♕f6 26 ♔g1 d4

And Black won quickly.

As meanwhile my game against Rob Willmoth with Black was going well, that left Oliver and me leading on 5/6 with a round to go. We made a quick draw and to his credit Mark, despite his disappointment the previous round, won a convincing endgame against Phil Brooks, to catch back up for a share of the title, and of the splendid 'City of Hull' trophy presented last year.

The last time I got my name on a British Championship cup was at the Under-14's in Coventry in 1970, 49 years ago. I was wondering if that would be a record, but probably even longer intervals happen in the Over-65's (any examples?), and it occurred to me that John Nunn won the Under-14's in 1968 and the Over-50's two years ago, showing similar longevity if, alas, far more class. Though I've only played, say, 12 or 15 times in British Chess Championships, they have been a stable and positive part of my life, as much a fixture in the calendar as Wimbledon tennis, say. I do feel a debt to all the organisers who have made this tradition possible.

Here, in honour of that tradition, and featuring an opponent who also remains active in today's chess world, is a win from the 1970 event.

T.Chapman-M.Truran
British Under-14's Championship, Coventry 1970

15 ♘xc6! ♗xc6 16 ♘c7+ ♔d8 17 ♘xa8 ♕xa8 18 ♗b6+ ♔d7 19 e5

Missing 19 ♖xc6! ♔xc6 20 ♕b3.

19...♘d5 20 ♗d4 ♖g8

21 ♖xc6! ♔xc6 22 ♕c2+ ♔b7 23 ♗e4

23 ♕b3+! ♔c7 24 0-0.

23...e6 24 0-0 ♕c8 25 ♕b3+ ♔a8 26 ♗xd5+ exd5 27 ♕xd5+ ♕b7 28 ♕xa5+ ♔b8 29 ♕d8+ ♕c8 30 ♕xc8+

Or just 30 ♗a7+ ♔b7 31 ♕b6+ ♔a8 32 ♕a5 ♔b7 33 ♗e3. **30...♔xc8 31 ♖c1+ ♔b7 32 a5 dxe5 33 ♗xe5 ♔a6 34 ♖c8**

And White won.

Finally, a plea to the ECF: I do feel both seniors' events should be nine-round tournaments. We have all been long used to eleven rounds. The European equivalent is nine rounds, the World eleven. Almost all FIDE-rated open tournaments are at least nine rounds. A seven-round event is too close in spirit to a weekend open sprint, and may not, as here, produce a clear winner.

Thanks for everything, and over to you!

A Humdinger

Your Editor had the very strange and sub-optimal situation of receiving default wins in rounds 3 and 4 of the British – the chance of that happening must be about one in a million. Poor Keith Arkell was so ill that he couldn't even arrive at the playing hall to make a quick draw, although he did impressively rally with wins in rounds 6 to 8 followed by causing David Howell a number of problems in the final round. Exactly a week before that Howell had been involved in another titanic struggle.

R.Palliser-D.Howell
British Ch., Torquay 2019
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 f3 c5 5 d5 d6 6 e4 0-0 7 ♘ge2 a6!?

A modern trend. All I could remember was that 8 a4 ♗a5!? had looked a little ugly for White in So-Aronian, St. Louis 2015, and that it was possible to allow ...b5.

8 ♘g3 b5 9 ♗f4

Forcing Black to clarify the central situation makes sense.

9...exd5 10 cxd5 c4

As does this. Will White need to lose time with 11 ♗e3 if he wishes to get castled?

11 a4!? ♗a5!

A multipurpose move, if mainly played to maintain Black's dynamic queenside structure.

12 ♗e2

12 ♗e3 would have been simpler, but I was worried about 12...h5!? and the simpler 12...♘bd7 13 axb5 axb5 14 ♗e2 ♖b8 should also promise Black decent counterplay.

12...♕b6

By now we were both burning up a fair bit of time and I was already beginning to regret weakening the b3-square.

13 ♕d2 ♘bd7 14 ♗e3

The first new move of the game, not that either of us knew it. 14 ♘f5? ♘c5 15 ♘e7+ ♔h8 16 ♖d1 would have been excellent for Black in Baldauf-Powierski, German League 2017, had he now gone 16...b4 17 ♘b1 c3 18 bxc3 bxc3 19 ♕c2 ♗d7.

14...♘c5 15 ♗d4!

White's main problem is that 15 0-0?? ♘b3 16 ♗xb6 ♗xb6+ comes with check, and so wins. As such, I decided it was high time to trouble the other king.

15...♘fd7 16 ♘f5 ♘e5

This looks very scary for White, but thankfully I have a resource.

17 ♘e7+ ♔h8 18 ♘c6!

Overprotecting the bishop on d4 is useful, as is the attempt to deflect the black knight from e5 and now, of course, 18...♘xc6 19 ♗xg7+! ♔xg7 20 ♕g5+ would have led to an early peace treaty being signed.

18...b4 19 ♘d1

Heading for e3, but the engines prefer 19 ♘a2!? when they indicate that at some stage soon Black should allow the afore-mentioned perpetual check, since 19...f5?! 20 ♘xa5 ♕xa5 21 ♗xe5 dxe5 22 ♕xb4 ♕xb4+ 23 ♘xb4 fxe4 24 0-0 favours White.

19...f5! *(see diagram at start of next page)*

Black can roll the dice so, although David thought straight after the game that he should have allowed the repetition.

20 ♕g5?

This asks too much of White's position, so I should have settled for 20 ♗xe5 dxe5 (20...♘b3!? 21 ♗xg7+ ♔xg7 22 ♕g5+ ♔h8 23 ♘e3! c3! is an extremely murky alternative) 21 ♘xa5 ♕xa5 22 ♗xc4 fxe4 23 0-0 when White should be able to grovel his way to rough equality.

20...♗d7

Naturally David doesn't fall for 20...♘cd3+?? 21 ♗xd3 ♘xd3+ 22 ♔e2 ♕c7 23 ♘xa5, but 20...b3+!? was possible.

21 ♘xe5 dxe5

Once again, Black might have given up his queenside dynamism to force the pace: 21...b3+!? 22 ♔f1!? (22 ♗c3 dxe5 23 ♗xa5 ♕xa5+ 24 ♕d2 is sub-optimal, but might have to be tried) 22...dxe5 23 ♗xe5 ♖f7 when I had managed to spot 24 ♘e3? ♘xe4! 25 fxe4 fxe4+ 26 ♔g1 ♗d2, which cleans White up, so was hoping that 24 exf5 ♘d3 25 ♗xd3 cxd3 26 g4 would work, but Black must be for choice after 26...♖e8.

22 ♗xe5 ♖f7 23 ♘e3

23...h6?

Driving the queen on to the f-file is logical, but 23...b3+! 24 ♔f1? (White finds his centre collapsing after 24 ♗c3 ♘d3+ 25 ♗xd3 cxd3 and 24 ♔d1 ♘d3 25 ♘xc4 ♘f2+ 26 ♔c1 ♕c5 leaves him struggling too) 24...♘xe4! 25 fxe4 fxe4+ 26 ♔g1 ♗d2 would have been a lovely way to crown Black's powerful dark-square play.

24 ♕f4 b3+ 25 ♔f1 ♗d2?

The right idea, but not in this exact position. The silicon points out the calm 25...♘xe4! 26 fxe4 ♕g6 when I would have had to have found 27 ♗xg7+! (27 ♕g3? fxe4+ 28 ♔g1 ♗b6 regains the piece, in view of 29 ♗f4? ♕f6 30 ♖f1 ♕xb2) 27...♖xg7 28 e5, after which absolutely anything might have happened.

26 ♗d4

Taking control of the key diagonal and David must have missed something around here as he made his next move with just a second left.

26...c3 27 bxc3 ♕a5?

27...b2 28 ♖b1 ♕b3! was much stronger, with the idea of 29 ♗xc5 (White should rush his remaining forces into play with 29 ♔f2! ♘xa4 30 ♖hd1 when he appears to stand better, albeit in a very murky position) 29...♕xc3 30 ♗b6 ♖f6 31 ♕c7 ♕c1+.

28 ♕xh6+

Very tempting, of course, but 28 ♘c4! ♗xf4 29 ♘xa5 ♘xa4 30 e5 would have been even stronger, keeping the black bishop away from c3.

28...♔g8 29 ♘c4 b2 30 ♖b1 gxh6 31 ♘xa5 ♘xa4 32 e5

The b-pawn is a serious trump, but despite it Black is close to lost due to White's dominant centre. We now semi-blitzed our way through to move 40.

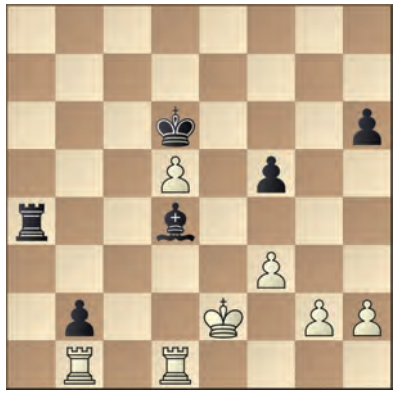
32...♗b5? 33 c4 ♗xa5 34 cxb5 axb5 35 ♗xb5?

35 ♔f2 ♗c3 36 ♗xc3 ♘xc3 37 ♖xb2 ♘xd5 38 ♗xb5 is two extra pawns.

35...♗c3! 36 ♗xa4? ♗xd4 37 e6 ♖xa4?

David has outplayed me over the past few moves and here 37...♖g7 38 ♗c6 ♖a1 39 ♔e2 ♖xb1 40 ♖xb1 ♖xg2+ 41 ♔d3 ♗c5 would surely have led to a draw.

38 exf7+ ♔xf7 39 ♔e2 ♔e7 40 ♖hd1 ♔d6



Having checked that we had reached move 40, I now sprinted to the toilet, but do be aware that under the latest FIDE rules you have to have an arbiter's permission to leave the playing hall when your own clock is running. On a different housekeeping point, it's no longer at all advisable to carry a bag around the hall with you whilst still playing. Poor Lorin D'Costa did and was defaulted against Charlie Storey after leaving the hall with it to buy a coffee – Storey asked the arbiter to check the bag and Lorin had to admit that it contained a switched-off mobile phone. Nobody would ever believe that Lorin would ever cheat, but in these modern times one simply must be very careful.

41 ♖xd4! ♖xd4 42 ♖xb2 ♖h4 43 ♔e3

43 h3 wasn't ridiculous, but I was certain that allowing the upcoming simplification should be winning.

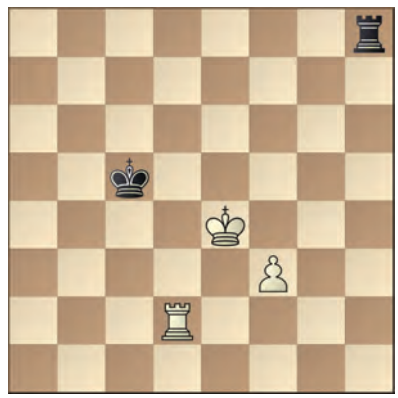
43...♖xh2

43...♔xd5? 44 ♖b5+ ♔e6 45 ♖b6+ ♔f7 46 h3 forces Black to give up his h-pawn in view of 46...♔g7? 47 f4, cutting the rook right out of play.

44 ♔f4 ♔xd5 45 ♔xf5 h5 46 ♖d2+ ♔c5 47 ♔f4 h4 48 ♔e3

48 ♔g4 h3 49 ♔g3 was also possible, since the pawn ending is a win for White.

48...h3 49 gxh3 ♖xh3 50 ♔e4 ♖h8



51 ♖d5+?

I was aware that this would allow Black a Gligoric-Fischer-type draw, but by now simply assumed that I'd been wrong that the ending was won with an f-pawn and Black's king cut off by two files. However, my intuition was correct and, as David pointed out after the game, White can hide the king on h6, i.e. 51 f4! ♖e8+ 52 ♔f5 ♖f8+ 53 ♔g5 ♖g8+ 54 ♔h6!, and if 54...♖f8 55 ♖f2 ♔d6 56 ♔g7 ♖f5 57 ♔g6 ♖f8 58 f5 ♖g8+ 59 ♔f7 with a simple win.

51...♔c6 52 f4?

Acquiescing to a half-point, but the tablebase points out 52 ♖d3! when White can still win.

52...♖e8+! 53 ♔d4 ♖e6 54 f5 ♖d6 55 ♖xd6+ ♔xd6 56 f6 ♔e6 57 ♔e4 ♔f7 58 ♔d4 ♔xf6 ½-½

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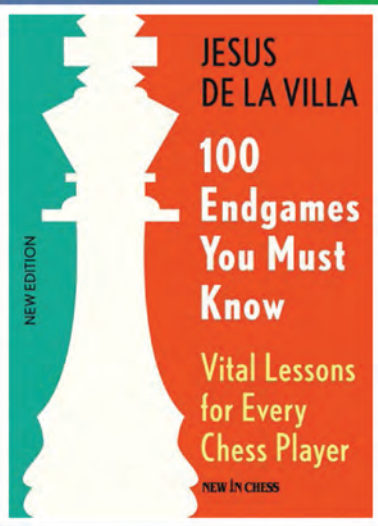
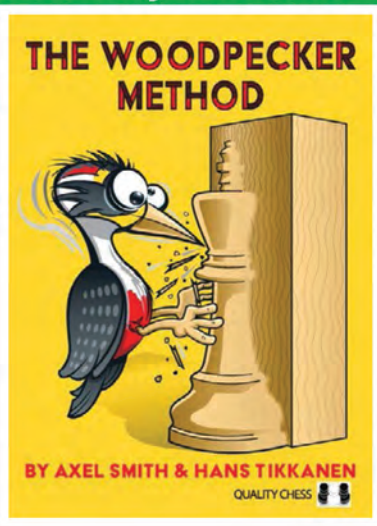
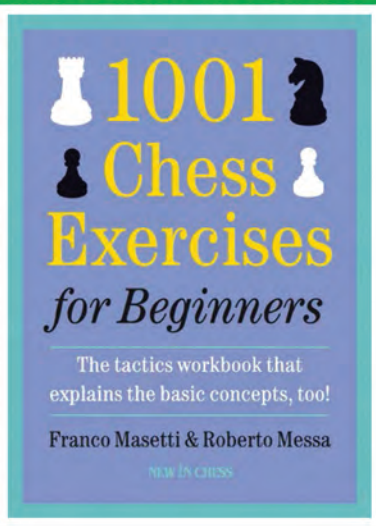
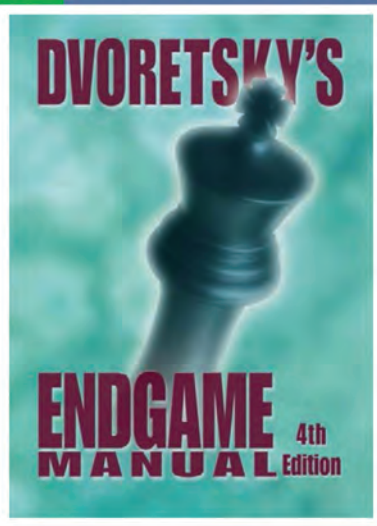








ALL THE WRONG MOVES

Stephen Moss reviews Sasha Chapin's rollicking new book, which is subtitled 'A Memoir About Chess, Love, and Ruining Everything'

Quest books have a particular appeal to journalists – quests provide a ready-made spine and structure for an extended narrative, which can otherwise be tricky for journos used to writing short pieces – and chess quests seem to have a special attraction, especially in the U.S. with its rich and distinctive chess ecosystem. J.C. Hallman's *The Chess Artist*, Paul Hoffman's *King's Gambit* and Fred Waitzkin's *Searching for Bobby Fischer* immediately spring to mind, mixing memoir, travelogue and an often double-edged immersion in chess.

Canadian journalist Sasha Chapin's *All the Wrong Moves* now joins this club, and a most enjoyable roller-coaster it is. Chapin was in his late 20s when he was seriously bitten by the chess bug – he had previously played a little at school – and spent two years chasing the usual dream of chess mastery. He is in fact completely useless, at least by the standards of many of those who read this magazine. Chapin is not explicit about his rating in the book and doesn't give any of his games in full, but a quick bit of research shows that in the tournament with which his two-year immersion ends, the Los Angeles Open of 2017, his rating was just 1390, though he played in the Under-2050 section of that event and scored a creditable 2/5 to finish in 34th place out of the 48 competitors.

But as so often with these quest books, you are not reading for the quality of the chess or in the expectation that the author will suddenly discover the nirvana of chess greatness. I produced my own quest book, *The Rookie: An Odyssey through Chess (and Life)*, in 2016, and when I set out four years earlier I confidently believed I could reach an Elo of 2000. I managed 1740 and even that is now dropping. As Chapin quickly comes to realise, it's tough for late starters and tougher too if your brain isn't configured in the right way and your powers of visualisation are poor, as he says his are.

The real attraction for the reader – and indeed the writer – is that the chess world is peopled by fascinating characters and that this world does indeed encompass the entire world. Chess is played everywhere, so the quest can take you wherever your imagination desires and your budget allows. Chapin starts playing with chess hustlers in Kathmandu; holes up for months in Bangkok and plays one disastrous game in the Bangkok Open, losing in 15 moves, before withdrawing; has an equally catastrophic experience in Hyderabad, losing most of his games and getting what sounds like dysentery; and finally achieves a redemption of sorts in Los Angeles.

Canadian journalist Sasha Chapin was bitten by the chess bug in Kathmandu. In Hyderabad he was bitten by a whole lot of other things. Now he charts his roller-coaster chess adventures.

The writing – very Americanised, very informal, with far too much use of "sort of" and "kind of" – will not be to everyone's taste, but for the most part I was carried along by its bravado and willingness to take risks. Chapin writes about his teenage drug-taking, his wacky schooling, his vigorous pursuit of sex – he knows he has become a chess nerd when he turns down an amorous opportunity in Bangkok because he is in the middle of an online game – and falling in love. It is really a rite-of-passage book, with occasional interludes involving the Grünfeld and the French Defence.

He is a good phrase-maker. The blessed Magnus is "A low-budget version of Matt Damon"; travelling is "A fun substitute for an identity"; and "Chess is sort of (sic!) like acting: top people make money, second-rate people teach, and everyone else receives spotty compensation at best". He also displays acuity and self-awareness, as when he is debating what sort of player he wants to be – complicated and idiosyncratic or resolute and defensive. He changes from week to week. "Now, looking back, this

inconstancy seems impossibly silly," he writes. "I was like a child who couldn't draw a house with crayons deciding whether to be more like Jackson Pollock or Francis Bacon."

Chapin is not bad at extended descriptions either. Sometimes he overreaches, in that North American posh-magazine-meets-creative-writing-class way, but when he pulls it off it's memorable. His summing up of elite-level chess is funny and accurate: "Top-tier tournaments are calm, buttoned-down affairs, sponsored by energy companies or banks, taking place in spacious, teal-carpeted venues [...] Assured, charcoal-blazered and regal in their bearing, the stars of the game are followed across lobbies by the chess press gang, a strange micro-community that watches their movements closely, whether in London, Qatar or Baku. Closing ceremonies typically feature jazz combos and plastic cups of cheap prosecco. In terms of atmosphere, these events are halfway between Wimbledon and a spelling bee."

I also greatly enjoyed the walk-on part accorded to grandmaster Ben Finegold, who coaches Chapin over the course of a month in St. Louis. Finegold also features in my book, and I found Chapin's portrait of this larger-than-life (in every sense) figure spot on. Finegold is funny, irreverent and full of excellent advice: never resign; beware the lure of blitz; avoid blunders and you'll be fine; don't sacrifice; never play f3; don't get emotional – it's just a game.

Chapin, in the chapter drawing on his time in St. Louis, mentions that Finegold offers to tell him the "secret of chess". This is not disclosed at the time and, of course, you wonder what it is. Then, when he goes to the beach after his final tournament in Los Angeles (he loses his last two games, but it's mostly fine), Chapin does at last disclose the secret – and it's a zinger. If I had adopted the philosophy Finegold advocates, I would definitely have got my FIDE rating up to 2000. I may yet!

One caveat about his stay in St. Louis, where I also spent time for my book. Chapin describes the city as very dangerous and makes it sound like you will be attacked at any moment, but I found it unthreatening – not just the upscale area where chess philanthropist Rex Sinquefield's club and museum are based, but downtown, too, which is where I stayed and happily walked around, sharing my nightly pizza with people living on the street. Chapin says weapons are banned on the city's metro system. My recollection is that the signs say they can be carried, but not visibly displayed, which visitors may or may not find reassuring.

As a dabbler in chess who vows that the Los Angeles Open will be his farewell to the sport, Chapin is not a wholly reliable witness. His preface, in which he aptly suggests that it is hard to explain to outsiders the attraction of a game that involves "Two nerds staring at a collection of tiny figurines", is distinctly off-putting in this regard. He swallows whole the canard that 600 million people play chess; indeed the headline of the preface is "The 600 million", and he doubles down on the contention that this number of "souls" are captivated by the game. But, however much publishers and authors of chess books aspiring to reach a broad market might like to believe it, the 600 million figure is no more than a piece of FIDE propaganda designed to pull in sponsors. Numbers of tournament players and the audience for online broadcasts suggest that the real figure for aficionados (as opposed to people who vaguely recall how the knight moves) is far lower.

I would also quibble with his contention that Albert Einstein was a chess obsessive. Einstein played chess, but disliked many aspects of the game, whose goal he said was "To beat the opponent by applying different tricks and deception". Chapin should read Einstein's foreword to Jacques Hannak's biography of Emanuel Lasker, where he makes clear that he felt chess to be largely a waste of his friend Lasker's considerable intellect. Chapin is also rather simplistic in his brief excursion into the life of Marcel Duchamp, greatly underestimating him as a player – he was good enough to play for France in four Olympiads between 1928 and 1933– and treating him as a victim who gave up art for chess, failing to understand that Duchamp always disliked the commercial art world and saw chess as a source of freedom precisely because it meant nothing.

Chapin may not be the trustiest of guides on some of the peaks of chess history, but he is very good at describing life in the foothills, and while I could never take his "obsession" totally seriously – he only competed for two years and didn't play in many tournaments – the brief journey is winningly described and often very funny. Who, after all, could resist the tremendous opening line of chapter one: "Anyway, like most people, I became obsessed with chess after I ran away to Asia with a stripper I'd just met." Or indeed his description of an epiphany in a toilet at the disastrous tournament in Hyderabad: "There's definitely something humbling about squatting over a hole in a distant nation, with your loved ones far away, and your lagoon-like thighs hanging before you, and the mosquitos hovering around you, waiting for the right moment to pump you full of malaria, while a young boy outside is thwarting your plans, wondering why you were stupid enough to cross the globe just so he could trounce your inadequate handling of the London System." We've all been there.

Stephen Moss's The Rookie: An Odyssey through Chess (and Life) *is published by Bloomsbury and available from Chess & Bridge for £8.99, while Sasha Chapin's* All the Wrong Moves *(Doubleday) is out now and available...*

A little bird just told me

A round-up of what the top players and chess personalities have been saying on Twitter

Anish Giri - @anishgiri
Congrats to @Vachier_Lagrave. I don't know what I find more impressive, the fact that he won this highly competitive ParisGCT, or that he found a way to lose two blitz games to me here. Truly a remarkable accomplishment!

French Defence - @TheFrenchDef
Fierce fight for the first spot of English chess between @DavidHowellGM, @GMGawain, @gmmds and @MickeyAdamsGM. And Luke McShane is just 10 points below them... #BritishChess2019

Daniel Gormally - @elgransenor1
Another British Champs for Michael Adams, the guy is a class act on and off the board. David Howell also very impressive. Glad I was doing the commentary, as would have stood little chance against those chess beasts.

Simon Williams - @ginger_gm
Also massive thanks to the commentators @IMAdamHunt and @elgransenor1 who did a brilliant show. Best yet at a British. I know from experience commentators don't get much gratitude, so do show your appreciation!

Martin Griffin - @MartinGr1ffin
They both did a great job. Really enjoyed their commentating and Gormally's humour Well done all.

2700chess - @2700chess
Meet 16 y/o Alireza Firouzja in the 2700 club! He scored 11.5/13 and TPR of 2800 at the Turkish League @TurkishChess to become the second youngest chess player who crossed the 2700 mark (later Wei Yi, but earlier than Carlsen).

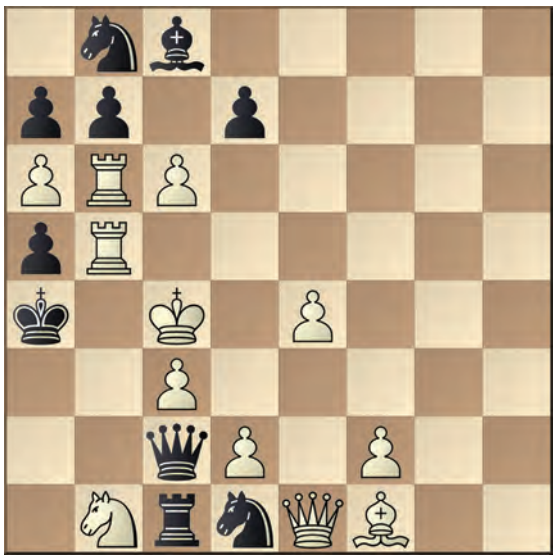
Hikaru Nakamura - @GMHikaru
It's truly been a long time since I've set foot in a public library!! Today was highly enjoyable winning Arena Kings on @chesscom, but more importantly seeing so many people reading and looking for books! #chess #reading #knowledge

GAISF - @gaisf_sport
The oldest player of 2019 @FIDE_chess World Cup is 53-year-old Egyptian chess Grandmaster, Essam El-Gindy, rated 2431 in the world. Just shows that it doesn't matter how old you are to compete in #Chess! Watch the #FIDEWorldCup here: www.twitch.tv/chess #MondayMotivation

The Flanders Position

Dr Michael Reeve has been pondering a very famous chess position

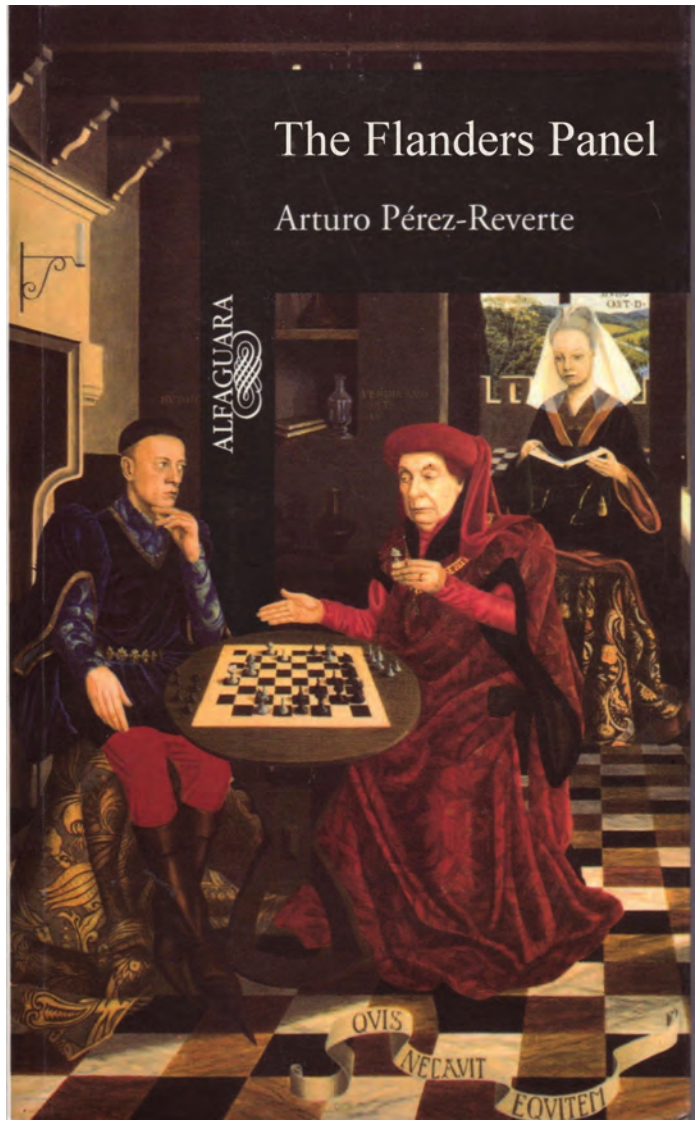
At the beginning of Arturo Pérez-Reverte's book *La tabla de Flandes* (Madrid 1990), published as *The Flanders Panel* by Harvill (1994) and then Vintage (2003, 2011), in a translation by Margaret Jull Costa, the heroine discovers underneath a painting of three figures – two men playing chess, one of them a knight shot before the date of the painting, and a woman – a question from the artist: 'Who killed the knight?'. As the artist evidently intended, she tackles it by applying it to the chessboard portrayed in the painting (shown on pp. 74 and 96; the pagination is the same in all three English editions).



A brilliant chessplayer who helps her manages to convince her that the murderer on the board was the black queen, which she takes to stand for the woman in the painting (p. 130). As it emerged at an early stage from an external source that the fatal shot was fired by an archer (p. 28), later described as "an obscure pawn whose name is lost to posterity", who "positioned himself [...] to wait [...] for the man to pass whose death had been bought with the gold coins jingling in his pocket" (p. 77), the woman in the painting must have been the knight's murderer in the sense of bribing the archer, though nothing on the board would correspond.

On the assumption made by the chessplayer that at the date of the painting modern rules applied (p. 72), the problem works as a deep chess problem with a unique solution, but not the one given by the chessplayer. The murderer was actually the queen's bishop's pawn. Either (a) the author knew this, but chose to present his supposedly brilliant chessplayer as a bungler or swindler, with the intention or consequence of duping readers content to trust the chessplayer, or (b) he didn't know it and must therefore have lifted the position from somewhere and muddled through with a shaky grasp of chess problems.

A sign of 'a' might be the chessplayer's repeated comment that there is something odd about the position of the pawns (pp. 93, 127), which indeed hold the key to the problem. Signs of 'b' might be the absence of any bishop from the historical setting and the fact that Black is holding the white knight (pp. 6 and 57); he would most naturally be doing this if he had just taken it, but its capture by the queen's bishop's pawn can't have been his last move, because the square that the pawn would have had to come from is occupied.



When I read the first Vintage reprint in 2005 and reached this conclusion, I wrote to Vintage asking whether they could shed any light, but they didn't reply. Encountering Pérez-Reverte's name in another context has rekindled my interest, and a variant of 'a' now occurs to me, namely that murder by the queen's bishop's pawn was the solution presented in the author's draft, but the publisher said 'That's all far too complicated: simplify it'.

A Spanish colleague also draws my attention to the rejoinder that Pérez-Reverte published in 2001 when someone pointed out in a Spanish journal that the Flanders position resembles one included by Raymond Smullyan in *The Chess Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes* (London, 1980; p. 61). The resemblance goes beyond the identical position of 13 pieces to the solutions offered.

Pérez-Reverte's defence, in a general protest against frivolous charges of plagiarism, was that he made no secret of his debt to Smullyan, quoted in the epigraph of chapter four, and that novelists inevitably put stories together from elements of their experience, but sometimes turn elsewhere for technical guidance; yet can he really have devised a problem that has a solution more rigorous than his own?

In my letter to Vintage I didn't include the analysis that I had drafted, but what I offer here is an improvement anyway. Several things in the earlier stages will be tiresomely obvious to readers of this magazine, but I had a wider audience in mind. I should be grateful for either objections or confirmation.

Under the rules of chess, some positions that can be set up on a board can't be reached in play: for example, one that differs from the starting position in having the white rooks exchanged with the black ones. Whether a position could have been reached depends in the first instance on the orientation of the board, i.e. which way the pawns are moving. Any chessplayer who can see the board and knows which player is White can determine the orientation, and the chessplayer in the book, who can see the board and the pieces taken, identifies as Black the player who has taken the white pieces, among them the knight (pp. 57, 75).

The author conveys this orientation to the reader by having the chessplayer adopt and explain the modern convention of numbering the squares from White's point of view (p. 74). As it's not immediately obvious that the position couldn't have been reached, let's assume that it could (fortunately, no impediment will arise). Let's also grin and go along with the assumption that at the date of the painting, 1471, modern rules applied.

From the posture of the players the chessplayer draws the plausible inference that Black moved last (pp. 68, 72-73). The inference can be checked, he says, by retrograde analysis (replaying the moves backwards), but when he embarks on this (p. 96), he takes it for granted that Black moved last, and in fact it couldn't have been worked out by retrograde analysis, because the last move could perfectly well have been made by White, e.g. rook to b5 or bishop to f1. Three questions are then explicitly raised about the position:

i. Who killed the knight, i.e. which black piece took the missing white knight (p. 74);

ii. What Black's last move was (pp. 96, 98);

iii. Who would have won with best play (pp. 1, 41-5, 184, 192-5, 207, 217-21, 225-6, 253-7).

As Black is holding the knight (pp. 6 and 57), most likely he took it with his last move, but that point isn't made. Even so, the chessplayer reasons as if the answer to (i) lay in the answer to (ii), which he makes it do as follows: of the black pieces, only the queen can have moved and only from b2, where it could have been taken by a rook on White's last move unless it was shielded by a white piece; that piece could only have been the missing knight, which moved from b4 to c2 and was promptly taken by the queen. This reasoning, however, rests on one contestable and one false assumption:

(i) That the only black piece free to make the last move was the queen, when in fact either the rook on c1 or the knight on d1 could be a pawn from b2 or e2 that on Black's last move promoted itself by capturing a white piece (bishop or knight on c1, knight on d1) – or at least these possibilities needed to be ruled out, the more so because they fit the likelihood that Black took a knight with his last move.

(ii) That the queen, if 'in check' by a rook, would have had to move, when in fact any piece other than the king, the only one strictly said to be 'in check' (in English anyway), can ignore a threat of capture.

For (ii) a weaker assumption can be substituted, that both players were reasonably competent and aimed at winning, so that Black wouldn't have given up his queen without adequate compensation or White have spurned it in the absence of any obvious drawback; but the position doesn't look at all like one that two such players would ever have reached. Ask any chessplayer, or for that matter take it from the brilliant one in the book that the game is "A bit strange" (p. 68), that "We're not dealing with a conventional game here" (p. 93), and that "There's something odd about this game" (p. 94).

For reconstructing earlier moves, therefore, only the rules of chess serve, and they don't establish White's last move. Furthermore, three things that the chessplayer says in his reconstruction are false or irrelevant: that the black pawn on a5 can't have moved last because "It's between a white pawn and its own black king' (pp. 96-7; it could never have reached a6, and the king is irrelevant), that "It's obvious" that the black rook was captured on a8 "Without ever having moved. It was taken by a white knight" (p. 128; if b8 was freed by a knight, the rook could have moved there and been taken from the open diagonal by a pawn or the dark-squared bishop; what matters is that it couldn't leave the back rank), that of the two white pawns captured "One was captured on a5 or b6 and the other one too far away' (p. 129; I've corrected from the Spanish original the translator's opaque rendering "the other one is too far away", but the first part of the statement is false, as will emerge below).

The third question also loses any historical dimension if it wasn't reasonably competent play, with a view to winning, that brought about the position; and it certainly isn't best play that takes the game on 500-odd years later to the last position shown (p. 258).

Let's therefore stick to (i), the question that interested the artist and interests the heroine. The main key is that a pawn can change file only by taking a piece (by 'piece' I mean anything on the board, not piece as opposed to pawn). The number of such changes is therefore limited by the number of pieces taken; White has taken six (four pawns, a rook, a bishop), Black, four (two pawns, a knight, a bishop). The colour of the squares accessible to the bishops limits the possibilities still further. If it can be shown that the two pieces taken by the pawn at a5 weren't the white pawns, one of them must have been the knight. Off we go, then.

As the white h-pawn couldn't have reached b6, let alone a5, and can't be any of the six pawns left on the board, it must have been taken, but not by the pawn at a5.

If not taken, the g-pawn is at either e4 or c6; but it couldn't have reached c6 without taking four pawns on the light squares, because the rook couldn't have escaped from the back rank and the bishop was on the wrong colour. Could the black e-h pawns have reached the c-f files? Not with the two captures at their disposal – two because two of the four made were made by the pawn at a5, as the chessplayer points out (p. 127).

Another reason why the white g-pawn can't be the pawn at c6 is that there was nothing it could take there, because the and b-d pawns are all intact, the rook couldn't have escaped from the back rank, and the bishop was on the wrong colour. If not taken, therefore, it's at e4, which it must have reached by taking two pawns, because again the rook couldn't have escaped from the back rank and the bishop was on the wrong colour.

As the g-pawn and not the e-pawn is at e4, the e-pawn must have been taken or else be one of the pawns at c6 and a6. It couldn't have reached even the c-file, though, without taking at least one pawn. Could any of the black e-h pawns have reached the d- or c-file? If the white g-pawn took the f- and e-pawns, the black g-pawn would have needed three captures to reach even the d-file, but only two were available, because two of the four made were made by the pawn at a5; and any other permutation runs into the same trouble. Another reason why the e-pawn can't be the pawn at a6 is that the pawn there can't have got there by a capture, but must have moved harmlessly from a5, which the e-pawn couldn't have reached. It isn't at c6 or a6, then, but must have been taken, and not by the pawn at a5.

We've come this far, though, by assuming that the g-pawn wasn't taken; but perhaps it was. Besides the h-pawn, then, the other taken was either the e- or the g-pawn. Neither can have been taken by the pawn on a5, which instead must have taken the knight and bishop.

Who killed the knight? The queen's bishop's pawn, and not on the last move, because the square that it would have had to come from, b6, is occupied. The brilliant chessplayer's answer, it turns out, wasn't just arbitrary: it was impossible.

BH Wood in Gijón

Luis Méndez and Pedro Méndez on their new book and BH Wood's adventures

Our goal in writing *The Gijón International Chess Tournaments (1944-1965)* was to make known to the English-speaking chess world a part of the history of Spanish chess previously virtually unknown outside Spain. Our book details the development of international tournaments in Gijón from 1944 to 1965.

Despite the Spanish Civil War only ending in 1939, the city of Gijón was able to promote itself by organising these tournaments. Besides, the Second World War did not hit Spain, which facilitated the arrival of European chess players, invited by the Casino de la Unión chess club and by the Gijón festivities commission. That paved the way for Alekhine's final events, the child prodigy Arturo Pomar and the post-war creativity on the chessboard displayed by Euwe, Larsen, Rossolimo and Wood, as well as the elegance of Chantal Chaudé de Silans.

We believe that works on chess history do not have to be boring, so we tried to combine the need to be rigorous with entertaining the reader, often by drawing on primary sources and the testimonies of those involved in the Gijón chess scene. Each tournament staged in Gijón receives its own detailed chapter, containing a crosstable, games, brief biographies of the participants, and with everything put into the national and international historical context of the time.

In total there are some 213 games presented, as well as plenty of photographs, while the book has been enriched by a foreword from Eugene Salomon, the living legend of Spanish chess and the last survivor of the 1947 Gijón tournament. Chapter 14 is dedicated to highlighting certain people that were important for the tournaments of Gijón. One of them was B.H. Wood, the subject of the following extract, which we hope you will enjoy.

Luis Méndez and Pedro Méndez pictured with their new work, published by McFarland. Did you realise quite how many leading players competed in Gijón in the years after World War II?

"Mr. Chess" – An Englishman in King Pelayo's Court

To begin with, it must be said that when the English chess player, author and publisher Baruch Harold Wood visited Gijón in the 1940s and 1950s, very few Asturians knew the essential role of this gentleman in the worldwide diffusion of the tournaments in Gijón, thanks to his articles about them in the chess magazines of that time. Of course, they also did not know the importance of Wood in the promotion of chess in their country, first with the publication of his magazine Chess, then with the organization of numerous festivals and activities around chess.

The year "Mr. Chess" first participated in the Gijón tournament (1947), he already carried a long experience in the chess world on his shoulders. He had learned the game at the age of 15 and had been developing his hobby and improving his technique, even during his university studies. He was born in Sheffield, Yorkshire, and was proud of this all his life; he attributed his determination and his ability to do any job to it. Although he graduated as a chemist from the University of Birmingham, he did not pursue the profession except for short periods such as World War II. His profession was chess, to which he devoted all his vitality.

In 1935 he founded the magazine *Chess*, which became very popular both in English-speaking countries and in the rest of the world. It was innovative for the time because of both its content and format. B.H. Wood started the publication of the games with the main moves in bold, making them stand out from the text. In his magazine one could read numerous letters, comments and news from all the tournaments, which projected a familiar approach to the game supported by photographs and drawings.

The magazine was edited by Wood, who used his own Linotype machines, in a Sutton Coldfield place called Masonic Buildings. It had a circulation of 8,000 copies every two weeks and was distributed in 110 different countries. Wood devoted all his energy to advertising his magazine all over the world. At the end of his life, he sold the magazine to Robert Maxwell; the publication was renamed *Chess Magazine*.

The activity of editor was complemented by that of organizer and player; he found time to write a book, translate or collaborate with other authors. His works include the famous *Easy Guide to Chess* (1942), *World Championship Candidates Tournament, 1953* (1954), and *100 Victorian Chess Problems* (1972). He also worked extensively as a chess columnist for the *Daily Telegraph*, *Yorkshire Post*, *Birmingham Post* and *Illustrated London News*.

As an organizer of popular chess festivals, he was unrivaled. On his initiative, numerous chess festivals were held all over the U.K.; he

took the opportunity of the Easter and summer holidays, when publishing activity was declining, to animate chess competitions all over the country. Wood put in the infrastructure, the chess clocks, the pieces and the boards. He took advantage of these occasions to advertise his magazine *Chess* and his editions, and always placed a bookstand run by his wife or children (they also collaborated in the publication of the magazine).

As a result of these efforts, many English club players from the 1940s and 1950s were able to meet and play against great masters such as Donner and O'Kelly. There is no doubt that Mr. Chess was the leader of the open tournaments in the United Kingdom. He held several positions in both the university chess and the federative organization chart and was a delegate to FIDE for several years. Because of this, he traveled all over Europe and during one of the journeys he arrived in Gijón.

As a player, probably because of all his activities, he did not achieve his maximum level, although one can say, looking at the numerical values of Chessmetrics, that at some point in his career he reached a 2500 Elo rating. Wood played for the English team at the 1939 Buenos Aires Olympics, where he was surprised by World War II. As a result of the conflict, he had to stay in Argentina for several months before he could return to his homeland. His teammates were repatriated before him in order to participate in the British service in charge of decoding enemy messages, while he had to wait until he found a ticket suited to his economic level.

During the war, he worked as a chemist in the food industry, improving the flavors of food rations. In this period he was a champion of correspondence chess, a modality in which he was a very strong player; although on many occasions he played too many games at the same time, which prevented him from achieving better results. His highest level of play came in 1948, when he competed magnificently in the English Championship. In the first week he won six games, but then his pace slowed, reaching a dramatic encounter with Broadbent who lost in the last round, so Wood came in second place.

He participated in numerous tournaments abroad; in Gijón, he was fifth with 8 points in 1947, second in 1948 with 7½ points, and eighth in 1951 with 3½ points.

Why did Wood come to Gijón? Obviously, he liked to travel; to do so in those postwar years, with much of Europe destroyed, was not easy: air communications were nonexistent, railways slow, roads bad and cars scarce. However, Wood emulated his English compatriots and, as a 19th-century traveler, went to southern Europe. Perhaps having learned some Spanish in Argentina in 1939, and the fact that Spain had not suffered the depths of calamity in World War II, would greatly encourage him to come (the invitation is likely to have come through the English federation).

Wood's arrival in Gijón in 1947 was extensively reported in the local press. The participation of an English player, in those years of international isolation, was quite an event. In the daily chronicles written by Dr. Intríngulis, in the newspaper *Voluntad*, constant reference is made to Wood, describing his style or his biography. This newspaper provided on 9 July 1947, under the title "The figure of Mr. Wood, participant in our tournament," the following commentary: "He is author of the book *Easy Guide to Chess*, founder of the magazine *Chess*. Better known as an organizer than a player, he was president of the British Chess Federation by correspondence, and a delegate of the British Chess Federation at the International Federation assembly in Winterthur, where he voted against the resolution to boycott Spain."

"B. H. Wood (left), founder of the English magazine Chess*, wearing the striped jacket of the University of Birmingham, playing against Lodewijk Prins, while Dr. Salas ('Dr. Intríngulis') watches attentively, Gijón 1947." Photo recproduced courtesy of Margarita Salas.*

His uninhibited style of play was very much appreciated by the Gijón participants. The colored and striped jacket he wore when playing his games, very rare according to the canons of Spanish fashion at the time, made a great impression on Spanish fans. They did not know that it was the University of Birmingham jacket that Wood always wore at sporting events (this fact was confirmed by his family to the present authors).

That year he finished in fifth place. He played magnificently in the first half of the tournament, but weakened in the second: he lost the last three rounds. At +6, -3, =4, he finished the tournament after Prins, Pérez, Medina, and Fuentes. He took the opportunity of his stay in Asturias to give a display of simultaneous games in the mining town of La Felguera, promising those who won an annual subscription to his magazine *Chess*; the result was +16, -3, =0.

Wood did not participate in the Avilés tournament, as he had to move to the FIDE congress, where he once again confirmed his compromise with Spanish chess. Before his departure, he declared to the newspaper *Voluntad* (12 July 1947) his intention to promote Spain again at the next assembly of the International Chess Federation. This support really paid off, and Spain became fully integrated into this organization.

He always had a great opinion of Gijón, its tournament and its organizers, which he reflected in several articles in *Chess*. Thanks to him, the city became known to the world as a place where chess was played with passion and where everyone was welcome. In the September 1947 issue of *Chess* he described his experience in Gijón thus:

The fourth annual tournament organized at Gijon took place on July 12th-24th, with L. Prins and B.H. Wood as visiting masters. Sir G.A. Thomas was also to compete but had to withdraw at the very last minute through ill-health. Preceding tournaments at Gijon hit world headlines as a result of the participation of Alekhine, who played that historic 92-move draw with the youthful Pomar one year and lost to Bonet and Medina the year after. A result that set the chess world asking "what is the matter?". We confirmed that Alekhine was definitely at the delirium tremens stage when he last played at Gijon; we met a man who had travelled with him on the night train from Madrid, who testified that the whole coach had been aroused at about 3 a.m. by the most frightful screams.

Though Pedro del Rio, president of the Casino, is a force in the background, the man of the Gijón tournament is Felix Heras, a great fellow, a born organizer and a good comrade. The visiting masters were given everything they could think to ask for and a lot more besides. The hospitality extended not only by the organizers but by every member of the club, could only described as princely. Prins mentioned that he liked motor cycling – an almost priceless machine was put at his disposal which had just won the Spanish Grand Prix.

Prins started badly with a near-loss to Wood and loss to Rico, but pulled up with a magnificent series of wins. Wood, on the

other hand started well and when the eleventh round started was unbeaten, had never stood lower than second, but lost his last three games and dropped to fifth. F.J. Perez tied with Prins for first place, a just reward for grimly determined play backed up by an extensive knowledge of the game; he was quite often in trouble but his resourcefulness and fighting spirit more than once extracted a win from a lost position. He is still in this early twenties and will go far.

Toran, yet another Spanish prodigy exactly one month older than Pomar, managed to finish half-a-point above him.

The following year (1948), the Englishman played again in the tournament in Gijón, with much better results than the previous year. He lost only one game (+6 -1 =3) and took second place after Rico. Mr. Chess had an excellent opinion about the Gijón champion, which he expressed in September 1948 in *Chess* magazine: "He is a player resembling G. Abrahams in appearance and style; an attacking player of pronounced temperament, irresistible when in form..."

In this new visit, to the surprise of everyone, he arrived by car after a long journey along the Cantabrian coast (the tortuous roads of the time turned any car journey into an epic one), and there were very few cars in Spain. This journey was chronicled by Wood two years later in his column in *The Illustrated London News* on 18 February 1950, not without some nostalgia: "My 250-mile car trip in 1948 along the precipitous north coast of Spain, with its ravines and hair-pin bends, my visit to the Altamira caves to see the wonderful pictures of bison done 30,000 years ago (even before chess!); the awe-inspiring church of Covadonga, looming sheer atop a precipice."

On this occasion, he also fought for victory in the Avilés tournament (already discussed in another chapter). He came close to winning it, finishing third after Pérez and Torán with only one defeat (+3 -1 =3). He wrote enthusiastically in *Chess* about the good game of Torán, who was undefeated despite his youth. He also pointed out in the September 1948 issue the large group of child prodigies that Spanish chess had at the time:

After winning the championship of Castile, young Arturito Pomar had the ignominious experience of being knocked out of the preliminaries of the Spanish Championship, not even getting into the final pool. He has now attained the ripe age of sixteen (on September 1st) so must expect Anno Domini to be taking its toll.

There seems little doubt that Roman Toran, Gijon-born, now of Alicante, is his superior at the moment. He scored his first "first place" at Aviles as noted above; was fourth in the Spanish Championship. He is younger than Pomar, not being sixteen until October 8th.

Felix García Ares. Champion of Avila is not yet fifteen. Somewhat older is Bilbao's champion Zuazo. So many child prodigies are blooming in Spain, the story is being told of two youths of twenty-five or so; one suggests a game of chess to his friend. "Good heavens, no!" is the reply. "It's a kid's game."

When Wood returned to the United Kingdom in 1948, he left with an excellent souvenir of his trip to Gijón: he brought his family a bunch of bananas – an exotic fruit in England at the time – which, according to his children, remained hanging in the living room until they had ripened enough to be eaten. His intention was to return to Gijón, as he had opened a bank account in the city, which was operative until his death when it was closed by his heirs. Although it took him two years to return, he was always informed of the news regarding the city's chess activities, and published in *Chess* any interesting news, such as Rico's record of simultaneous games or the result of the Gijón tournament in 1949.

He returned for the 1951 tournament; but as it was a high level event and he was out of shape, he got a bad result (+3 -6 =1) that relegated him to eighth place. That year, Wood arrived in Gijón after a very long journey – also by car – from Venice, where he had participated in the FIDE congress. His report in the September edition of Chess said:

The eighth of Gijon's (Northern Spain) series of international chess tournaments was undoubtedly the strongest and may unhappily be the last, for Felix Heras who has been the genial and gifted source of action, may be promoted in his work and transferred to Madrid. His gain will be our loss; unless perhaps a series of Madrid events ensue!

Euwe and Pilnik each annihilated the tail-enders efficiently. Rossolimo played weakly against Euwe. Medina beat Euwe in a game in which the ex-World Champion did not distinguish himself and should have beaten Pilnik, as he won two pawns by excellent play only to be out-endured in the end-game. Wood had a poor return to international tournament play after eighteen months.

As ever, the tournament was marked above all by friendliness and hospitality which touched heights which only those who have experienced it can imagine.

B.H. Wood did not return to Gijón: the cancelation of the international tournament in the following two years and his multiple occupations were the cause. His enormous efforts as a publicist and organizer led him to important roles: he became president of the England Schools Chess Association, president of the International Correspondence Chess Association, and president of the British Universities Chess Association, as well as a life member of FIDE in 1953. He was also an international arbiter and FIDE judge.

For his good rapport with the club players and his unceasing efforts to popularize the game, he received the name, Mr. Chess. The Queen of England when she bestowed upon him the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to chess, remarked: "Oh, you are the chess player."

His chess heritage has been left in the history of British chess and especially in his four children: Frank, Philip, Peggy and Chris, all chess players, who sometimes also played with the Sutton Coldfield Chess Club team, which he founded. His daughter Peggy was the UK's junior and absolute female chess champion.

Baruch Harold Wood died on 4 April 1989, as a result of the complications of diabetes. On the gravestone shared with his wife, an epitaph with the verses of the Persian poet, probable chess player and mathematician Omar Khayyam (c.1048–c.1131) reads:

> *For some we loved, the loveliest and the best.*
> *That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,*
> *Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,*
> *And one by one crept silently to rest.*

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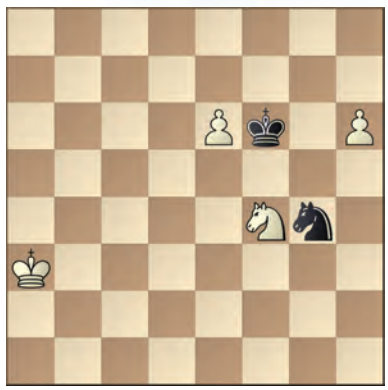
Find the Winning Moves

24 puzzles to test your tactical ability, with, as ever, the positions grouped in rough order of difficulty. The games come from many recent events, including the British Chess Championships. Don't forget that whilst sometimes the key move will force mate or the win of material, other times it will just win a pawn.

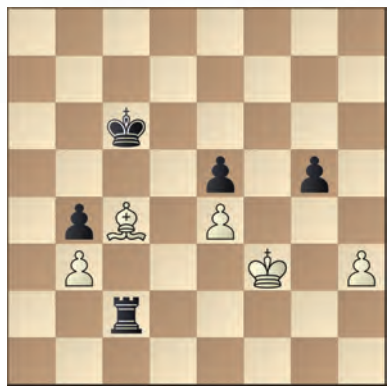
Solutions on page 54.

Warm-up Puzzles

(1) A.Katz-I.Nyzhnyk
Las Vegas 2019
Black to Play



(2) A.Grischuk-Yu Yangyi
Riga (rapid) 2019
White to Play



(3) N.Davies-Y.Han
Kendal 2019
Black to Play

(4) A.Gogia-R.Nayak
National Schools Ch., Uppingham 2019
Black to Play

(5) Yu Yangyi-V.Gujrathi
Danzhou 2019
White to Play

(6) B.Derakhshani-J.Pigott
British Ch., Torquay 2019
Black to Play

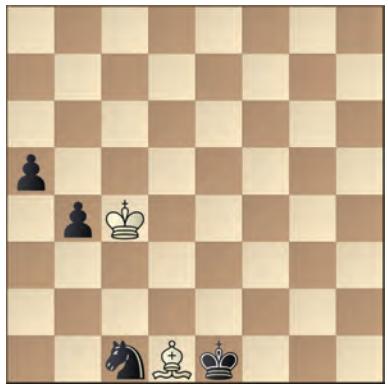
Intermediate Puzzles for the Club Player - Solutions on page 54

(7) T.Crouch-D.Gilbert
Pimlico 2019
Black to Play

(8) K.Lie-E.Risting
Norwegian Ch., Larvik 2019
White to Play

(9) T.Hillarp Persson-E.Blomqvist
Swedish Ch., Eskilstuna 2019
White to Play

(10) P.Krzyzanowski-J.Rudd
British Ch., Torquay 2019
Black to Play

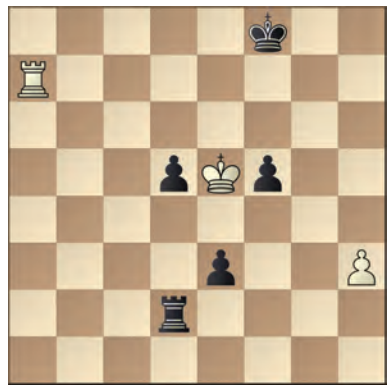


(11) S.Khanin-D.Paravyan
Yaroslavl 2019
White to Play and Draw

(12) R.Cowan-K.Pattni
Major Open, Torquay 2019
Black to Play

(13) D.Nestorovic-S.Ernst
Veliko Gradiste 2019
Black to Play

(14) M.Zufic-D.Grant
Pula 2019
White to Play



(15) E.Goodwin-R.De Coverly
British Over-65 Ch., Torquay 2019
White to Play and Draw

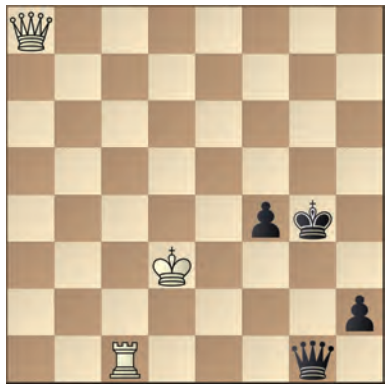
Harder Puzzles for the Club Player – Solutions on page 54

(16) D.Gorodetzky-A.Moiseenko
Netanya 2019
White to Play

(17) J.K.Duda-S.Mamedyarov
Riga 2019
Black to Play

(18) M.Kostecka-A.Nazarova
Bratislava 2019
Black to Play

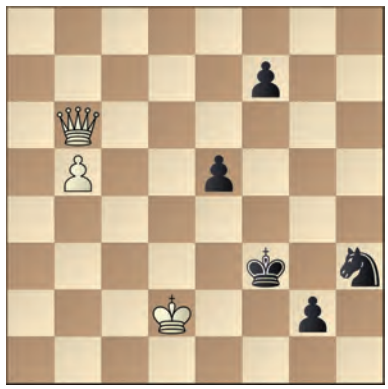
(19) C.Holland-F.Rocco
British Ch., Torquay 2019
Black to Play



(20) C.Clarke-R.Willmoth
Golders Green (rapid) 2019
White to Play

(21) I.Iljiushenok-V.Fedoseev
Yaroslavl 2019
White to Play

(22) E.Inarkiev-V.Gujrathi
Danzhou 2019
Black to Play



(23) J.Van Foreest-E.L'Ami
Dutch Ch., Amsterdam 2019
Black to Play and Draw

(24) S.Mamedyarov-L.Aronian
Zagreb 2019
Black to Play

How Good is Your Chess?

by Grandmaster Daniel King

Ding Liren suffered a fractured hip in a bike accident at Norway Chess 2018 – in the middle of an extraordinary run of unbeaten games that had seen him steadily rising through the top-ten in the world. Incredibly, taking three months off didn't seem to damage his prospects, and by November 2018 he had managed to last one hundred games without defeat. That brought him to no.3 in the world rankings, where he is now firmly established, not far behind Fabiano Caruana. Just recently he has slid back to 2799 on the live rating list, but he is in no danger of being overtaken by those behind.

When I first saw Ding at the Biel Grandmaster tournament in 2013, he was consistently aggressive, playing wild King's Indians with Black, and with White, invariably gunning for the king from the off. Over the past couple of years, Ding has learned to play a greater variety of positions and more solid openings.

Earlier this summer, I was able to witness his skill at first hand at the Lindores Abbey rapid tournament. He finished in second place, and really should have won the tournament: Carlsen held an endgame against him in the last round by the varnish of a pawn, as shown by Jon Speelman in the July *CHESS*.

Ding comes across as supremely phlegmatic, in complete control of his emotions at the board – and perhaps that's why Magnus finds him such a difficult opponent. In their first-round game, the world champion caught him in an unusual opening and started turning the screw in an endgame. Against any other player I would have predicted the inevitable – but Ding remained cool and held. Away from the board, he is quiet but friendly, and has a gentle sense of humour.

In the recent Zagreb super-tournament, he 'only' scored 50%, while finally losing to Carlsen. Perhaps it's a measure of how far he has come that this score was deemed below par. In any case, I'd like to examine a game that he played at that event against Ian Nepomniachtchi, himself a recent entrant into the top-ten. After a solid start, Ding starts to re-live his youth with a blistering attack – but very much from a sound basis.

Begin after the first diagram. Whenever Black has moved, stop and try to guess White's reply which will be on the next line. Try to analyse as much as you would in a game – it could earn you bonus points. The article will test your standard of play or, if you prefer, just enjoy a fine game.

Ding Liren pictured at the Lindores Abbey event which he might well have won. He unusually lost twice in Zagreb, but did have the consolation of a rather fine victory over Nepomniachtchi.

Ding Liren-I.Nepomniachtchi
Zagreb 2019
English Opening

1 c4 e5 2 g3 ♘f6 3 ♗g2 d5 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 ♘f3 ♘c6 6 0-0 ♗e7 7 d4 e4 8 ♘e5 f5 9 ♘xc6 bxc6

The test starts here.

10 ♕c2

Five points. With Black's knight sitting proudly in the middle of the board, and the strong pawn on e4 blocking out the light-squared bishop, gaining an advantage from this position is difficult for White. I should know – I once played 10 ♘d2 (*one point*) and my opponent equalised comfortably: 10...0-0 11 ♘c4 c5 12 dxc5 ♗xc5 (King-Joyce, Dublin 1995). I might have tried 11 ♘b3 instead, trying to fix those doubled pawns, but if Black's central position isn't challenged, I don't believe that White can achieve much. The position after the exchange on c6 is like a reversed French Defence – and at the moment not a very favourable one for White.

10 ♕c2 is much better as it immediately creates a threat, preventing Black from developing smoothly.

10 ♕a4 (*three points*) also puts pressure on the pawns, forcing Black to check his stride.

10 ♘c3 (*one point*) doesn't put Black under any pressure: 10...♗e6 is rock solid.

10...♘b4

The obvious way to defend the c-pawn is 10...♗d7, but then 11 ♘d2 is a superior version of what I was trying to do. The knight heads to b3 or c4 depending on how Black replies and there is pressure on the c-file.

11 ♕a4

Three points. Maintaining pressure on the pawns.

Instead, 11 ♕c3 (*two points*) looks awkward, but 11...♗d7 12 ♕c4 is still not easy for Black; so 11...♕d7, but that's not the best square for the queen.

11 ♕c4? would be met by 11...♗a6; and 11 ♕b3? is also a mistake due to 11...♕xd4.

11...♗d7

12 a3

Two points.

12 ♘c3 (*two points*) is also sensible.

12...♘d5

In the past, 12...c5 has also been played, but Black has not had an easy time: 13 ♕d1 ♘c6 (13...♘d5 14 dxc5 c6 15 ♕c2 was more enterprising in Shovunov-Blednov, Elista 2008, but Black never had enough for the pawn) 14 dxc5 ♗xc5 15 ♗f4 is tricky considering that castling is still inadvisable, Sandipan-Krush, Gibraltar 2007.

13 ♘c3

Three points. Having fiddled about with the queen (for a good reason), it is high time to bring some more pieces into the game. There is no need to fear 13...c5 as Black is lagging in development: 14 ♕a6 ♘xc3 15 bxc3 cxd4 16 cxd4 0-0 17 ♗f4, with strong pressure. White will be the first to bring the rooks into the game and Black's king is vulnerable.

13 ♕c2 (*one point*) is a bit tame, but there are still chances to obtain some pressure after 13...0-0 14 ♘d2.

13 ♕c4 gets hit again, and this is taking too many liberties: 13...♘b6 14 ♕b3 ♗f6 15 e3 h5 seizes the initiative.

13...♗d6

Instead of this, how would you respond to 13...0-0? Answer on the next line.

14 ♕c4 (*two points*) wins a pawn. This was the point of Ding's play.

14 f3

Four points. Challenging Black's centre is essential, otherwise he will be left with a tremendous space advantage and a great opportunity to attack on the kingside. This is exactly the right moment to strike: with Black's king still in the middle, his chances to create counterplay are limited.

Instead, 14 ♗d2 is too tame; and 14 ♕c4 can be met by 14...♘b6 15 ♕b3 ♕f6, followed by ...♗e6.

14 ♕a5 (*two points*) is the best of the alternatives: at least there is a threat to the knight on d5, and the queen is safe enough.

14...exf3

15 ♗xf3

Two points. The natural move, and it even prevents Black castling as 15...0-0 16 ♘xd5 cxd5 17 ♗xd5+ is check, so White wins a pawn. 15 ♖xf3 allows 15...0-0, and 15 exf3 is simply ugly; both block their own pieces.

15...♘b6

16 ♕b3

One point. Preventing Black from castling. Nepo was just one tempo short of reaching safety, but now...

16...♕f6

17 ♗e3

Three points. Bringing the bishop, and next the queen's rook, into play is sensible, although there were some fascinating alternatives at this point.

Given that Black is unable to castle on the kingside, this feels like a free hit for White, so my first thought would be to play 17 e4 (*one point*). This is the kind of move I would play in bullet chess without thinking. However, Black should bravely take the pawn: 17...♕xd4+ 18 ♔g2 and then choose between 18...♕c4 (chicken) 19 ♕xc4 ♘xc4 20 exf5 which is about even; or 18...0-0-0 and roll the dice.

17 ♖d1 (*three points*) is strong when 17...♕f7 18 ♕xf7+ ♔xf7 19 e4 gives White the initiative.

I bet that Ding was tempted by 17 ♘e4 (*three points*). Taking the knight loses the queen to a bishop check, so 17...♕xd4+ 18 ♗e3, and it's getting tricky. I suspect Ding rejected this because of 18...♕c4, but White can keep the attack going with 19 ♘xd6+ cxd6 20 ♕b4! (the difficult move to envisage) 20...♕xb4 21 axb4 when the bishops and open a-file give White the advantage.

By the way, 17 e3 is much too tame: Black would seize his chance to play 17...h5 and can still castle queenside to fuel the attack.

17...♕g6

18 ♗f2

Two points. Protecting against a potential strike on g3.

18...h5

19 e4

Two points. Made possible by 18 ♗f2. If 19...fxe4 20 ♘xe4 0-0-0 21 ♘xd6+ ♕xd6 22 d5 with a dangerous initiative. White's bishops do a great job of defending and at the same time strike across the board to the enemy king.

19...h4

True to form, Nepo isn't backing down. The stakes have been raised. How are you going to react?

20 exf5

Three points. I'm reluctant to hammer out the old cliché 'meet a wing attack with an attack in the centre' – because there are so many exceptions that don't just test the rule, but simply refute it. Nevertheless, opening the position is in this case correct.

20 e5 (*one point*) was possible, but to make the plan work well, one has to find a series of difficult moves starting with 20...♗e7 21 g4. It's all very messy, and compared to the game, not recommended.

20...♕xf5

21 ♖ae1+

Two points. White's pieces are combining beautifully. The *same score* for 21 ♘e4 as 21...0-0-0 would just be a case of out of the frying pan and into the toaster: 22 ♘xd6+ cxd6 23 ♖ac1. Only one king is under fire.

21 ♗e4 would spoil matters: 21...♕g5, and now White's in trouble.

21...♔d8

22 ♘e4

Three points. Defending and attacking simultaneously.

22 ♗g2 would allow Black back in the game after 22...hxg3 23 ♗xg3 ♕d3, and it's getting tricky.

Likewise, 22 ♗e4? ♕g4.

22...♕g6

23 ♘xd6

Two points. Simultaneously weakening Black's king position, and making White's more secure.

23...cxd6

24 d5

Four points. Ding has spotted a very devious idea, and this is just the prelude.

24 a4 (*three points*) is also good, although Black can create a little complexity with 24...d5 25 a5 ♘c4.

24...c5

Instead, if 24...♘xd5 25 ♗xd5 cxd5 26 ♕b7 ♖c8 27 ♗xa7 followed by a check on b6 is curtains.

25 a4

Five points. In this position, even more effective than on the previous turn.

Instead, 25 ♖e6 ♗xe6 26 dxe6 looks very tempting, but after 26...♖c8 White's attack isn't as strong as it looks at first sight.

25 ♗e4 ♕g4 is a one-hit wonder, and 25 ♕c3 ♕f6 prolongs the battle.

25...♗xa4

Instead, how would you respond to 25...♘xa4?

In this case 26 ♖e6 (*two points*) is a killer: 26...♗xe6 27 dxe6 – Black has a knight and a rook *en prise*.

26 ♕a3

Two points. White threatens ♖e6, destroying Black's king position.

26...♖e8

27 b4

Three points. Black has defended against one of the threats, but not both. He is ripped apart from the other side. After capturing on a4, for a moment Black was off balance and containing White's duel threats was impossible.

27 ♖e6 (*one point*) is more complicated, though also promising: 27...♖xe6 28 dxe6 ♖c8 29 ♖e1 with a huge initiative.

27...♖c8

Instead of this, how would you respond if Black had played instead 27...c4? Answer on the next line.

It's a little surprising that White isn't winning material immediately, but 28 ♗xb6+ axb6 keeps hold of the bishop.

The move I like the most for White is 28 b5 (*two points*), as it reopens the queen's diagonal and so prevents Black from moving the queen away from protecting the pawn on d6.

One point for 28 ♖e6 which is also good.

28 bxc5

One point. Having played b2-b4, Ding is consistent, chipping his way through Black's position.

28 g4 (*one point*) was also good, threatening to take on h4.

28...♖xe1

29 ♖xe1

One point. Let's not get too clever. Of course you can take with the bishop, but let's just be normal.

29...hxg3

30 hxg3

Two points. Instead, 30 ♗xg3 ♖xc5 keeps Black in the game.

30...dxc5

31 ♔g2

Two points. White has many good moves in this position. This has such a solid feel to it, taking the king off the back rank, tucked neatly behind the pawn and bishops that I can understand why Ding played it. Having protected the g-pawn, the threat is to take on c5 with the bishop.

The *same score* for 31 ♗g2 – the queen defends the g-pawn, so ♗xc5 is threatened; and 31 g4 also sets up the same threat, while opening up the possibility of ♗g3 or ♗h4+.

And 31 ♖e6 (*two points*) 31...♕b1+ 32 ♔g2 is also heading in the right direction.

31...♕c2

32 ♕e3

Three points. Black's queen goes one way, White's queen goes the other. Mate in one is threatened – that's good enough to disregard the alternatives.

32...♖c7

33 ♕e6

Two points. Threatening ♕g8+ and a swift mate. The *same score* for 33 d6, 33 ♕g5+ or 33 ♕f4. All these moves work as, in effect, White is playing with an extra queen as her counterpart is stuck on the other side of the board.

33...♖d7

34 d6

Two points. Threatening mate again.

34...♔c8

35 ♖h1 1-0

Three points. A knockout blow. Black resigned as mate cannot be avoided: 35...♔b8 36 ♖h8+ ♘c8 37 ♕d5 and the queen shoots down the diagonal.

35 ♖e5 (*three points*) is also decisive: 35...♔b8 36 ♖xc5 followed by ♕e8+.

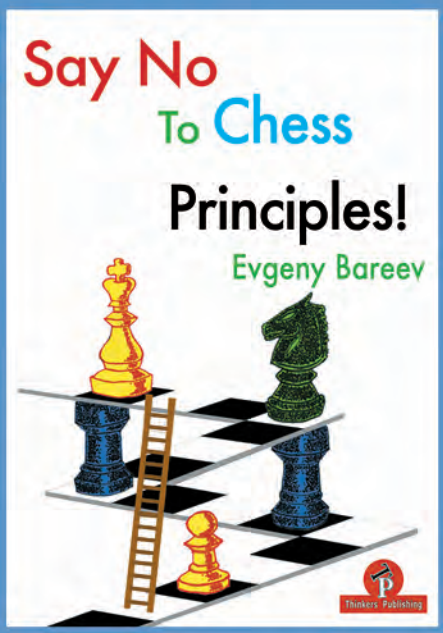
It was still not too late to mess up. I gave this position for an online audience to consider and 35 ♗g4 was one of the first replies offered. Opening the diagonal to the king doesn't feel right and, sure enough, 35...♗c6+ gives Black a solid defensive position from nowhere: 36 ♔g1 ♔b7; and 36 ♔h3 is even worse – 36...♕h7+ forces mate. I'll leave you to administer your own penalty if you went for this...

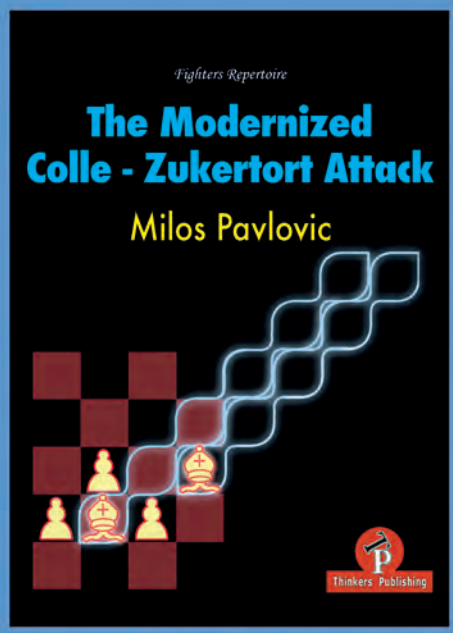
Glance back at the position in the very first diagram where Black is in complete control of the centre and has easy development. Now look at the final position, just 25 moves later, where Nepo's position has been ripped apart and his king caught in the middle. Brilliant play from Ding.

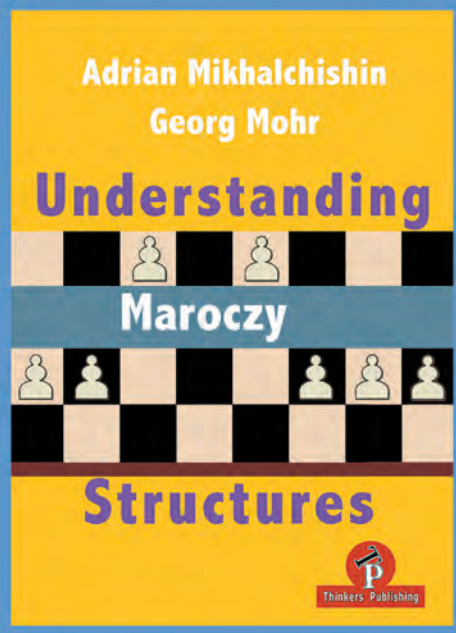
Now add up your points:

0-18	Unlucky
19-37	Average Club Player
38-45	Strong Club Player
46-53	FIDE Master
54-61	International Master
62-73	Grandmaster

Ed. – If you have any questions regarding this article, please contact Daniel directly through his website www.danielking.biz.







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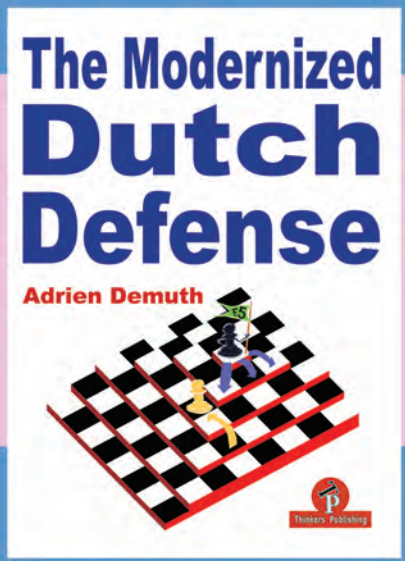

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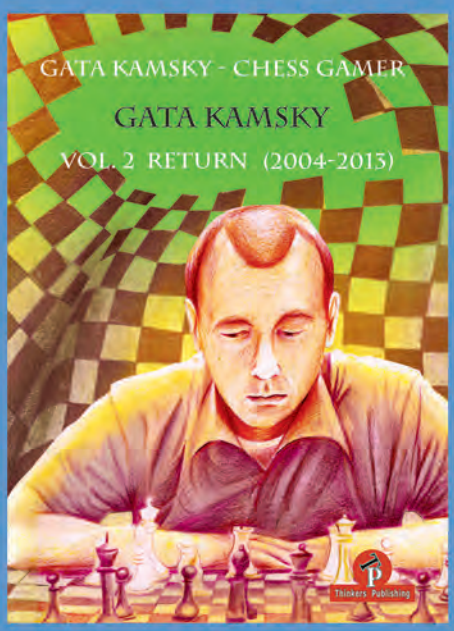
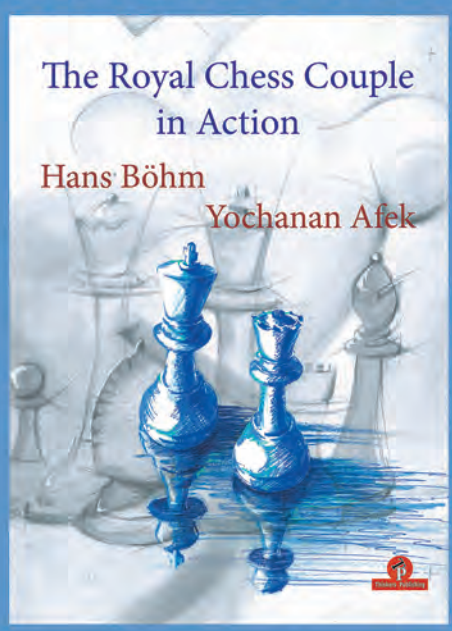
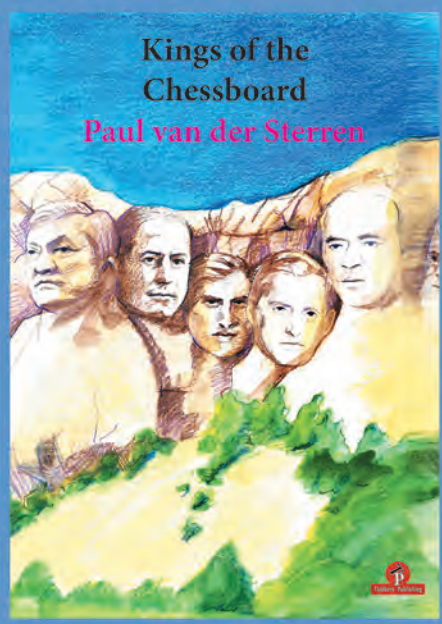






All that Glisters is not Gold

Inspired by *The Merchant of Venice,* Carl Strugnell reports on life in Paris and Belgrade

Some of you have been wondering where I had disappeared to since I wrote my last article about a rough time at the Batumi (Kobuleti) Olympiad, so here I am, stamping arrival on my work card. Ultimately constructive in the long run, these past 8 months haven't been an easy ride.

In October, I resolved to journey back to Paris, the city of my youth, to find a job. Fancy that, working for a living. I can't say my parents didn't warn me. Partly resentful my artistic aspirations don't quite qualify to fill up my tummy, but the prospect of putting aside a stash of hard currency to appease my yearning for freedom and play granted me enough enthusiasm for the task. Truth be told, I knew a way to reconcile working hours and chess productivity. Native English and proximity being two irrefutable arguments in this line of work, I knew I was in with a chance.

In less than a week I was set up with my new role as a night receptionist at a three-star hotel, a five-minute walk from my place of residence stopwatch in hand. Between giving two sets of keys and printing out a bill, I was able to read Jack London while *Komodo* was running in the background, fulfilling the tantalising promise of near future theoretical completeness. I played only four games during the next six months in the French league, knowing full well having one's nights and days turned upside down would play me a few tricks.

A.Lazo-C.Strugnell
French League 2019

13...h6??

13...g6 retains full chances for both...no comment.

14 ♗h7+ 1-0

One month in, the yellow vest riots broke out. I don't believe in political uprise, not that I don't support a feeling of injustice or feel attached to what one might label 'the people', just that I am too busy dwelling on anthropological hypotheses behind such actions. Maybe it's intuitive, but as a chess player the only perpetration I can recognise as having any effect is killing the king – and then it will only make you happy until the next one comes along.

As the weeks passed, I got pretty fed up of moving pots of plants back and forth for them not to be used by mob justice on a Saturday – I might add, by the percentage of the population that weren't consumed by the hysteria of Christmas shopping, sometimes only a street away from the action (a truly postmodern spectacle to witness).

I came to some conclusions. In an atomised society, the masses seek to partake in archaic ritual, using the forms of discontentment borrowed from a time where the principle of reality held true. However, this 'collectivity nostalgia' isn't powerful enough to repair the 'collective' antenna in the hyperreal, media-saturated, technological dystopia we live in. Reality has disappeared in its own excess of signs and images, leaving room only for simulation.

For my babbling diatribe to make any sense, one might be interested in comparing my win against a Serbian legend and one by a 2360 against Karpov in 2008. Because you see, chess, too, has disappeared into simulation: we incessantly repeat themes and there is a disenchanting redundancy, although with chess we can take comfort in the fact that we choose our mode of disappearance.

C.Strugnell-B.Damljanovic
Srebreno Jezero 2019
Sicilian Kan

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 ♘c3 a6 4 d4 cxd4 5 ♘xd4 ♕c7 6 ♗d3 ♘f6 7 f4 ♗b4

I was fully 'prepped' against this sharp move. 7...d6 8 ♕f3 is the main line and should be preferred.

8 0-0 d6

If 8...♗xc3 9 bxc3 ♕xc3 10 ♘b3, while after 8...♗c5 9 ♘ce2 ♘c6 10 c3 d6 11 ♔h1 ♗d7 12 ♕e1 0–0 13 ♕h4 ♖fe8 14 ♘f3 e5 15 b4 ♗b6 16 fxe5 dxe5 17 ♘g5 h6 18 ♖xf6 hxg5 19 ♗xg5 ♗e6 20 ♘f4!! ♘e7 21 ♘d5 ♕d7 22 ♖h6 ♘g6...

....I will let you figure out why the 12th world champion resigned in J.Jackova-A.Karpov, Marianske Lazne 2008.

9 ♔h1 ♘bd7 10 ♗d2! ♗c5

Avoiding 10...♘c5 11 ♘cb5!.

11 ♘f3 e5 12 ♕e1

It transpires that 12 fxe5! dxe5 (or 12...♘xe5 13 ♘xe5 dxe5 14 ♗h6!) 13 ♘d5 ♘xd5 14 exd5 is even stronger.

12...0-0 13 ♕h4 ♖e8 14 fxe5 dxe5 15 ♘g5 h6

16 ♘xf7! ♔xf7 17 ♗c4+

Also effective is 17 ♘d5 ♕c6 (or 17...♕d8 18 ♕h5+ g6 19 ♕h4! ♖h8 20 ♗xh6) 18 ♕h5+ ♔g8 19 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6

20 ♖xf6 gxf6 21 ♗c4+ ♗e6 22 ♕g6+ ♔h8 23 ♕xf6+ ♔h7 24 ♕xh6+ ♔g8 25 ♕g6+ ♔h8 26 ♗g5 and wins.

17...♔g6

If 17...♔e7 18 ♘d5+ or 17...♔f8 18 ♗xh6.

18 ♕g3+ ♔h7 19 ♗f7! ♕d8! 20 ♘d5!

And not 20 ♕g6+? ♔h8 21 ♗xh6 gxh6 22 ♕xh6+ ♘h7.

20...♔h8?

20...♘xd5? 21 ♗xh6 is easy, but the game would very much have continued after 20...♖f8 21 ♕g6+ ♔h8 22 ♘xf6 ♘xf6 23 ♗xh6 ♖xf7 (23...gxh6 24 ♖ad1! ♕e7 25 ♖xf6 results in Black being too tied up after 25...♗e3 26 ♖df1! ♖d8 27 h3) 24 ♕xf7 ♕g8 25 ♗xg7+ ♕xg7 26 ♖xf6 ♕xf7 27 ♖xf7 b6, if with White for choice with a rook and three pawns against the bishop-pair.

21 ♗xe8!! ♕xe8

If 21...♘xe8? 22 ♖f7.

22 ♗xh6

The computer seems to suggest I wasn't very courageous, but I justified it as being happy to keep only a small plus and remain in control rather than take material and be submitted to an initiative. 22 ♘c7 ♕e7 23 ♘xa8 ♘xe4 24 ♕e1 ♘df6 might well be harmless, but from a human point of view, I have all sorts of things to solve here.

22...♗f8

22...gxh6 23 ♘xf6 ♘xf6 24 ♖xf6 ♕h5 25 ♖af1 with an ongoing plus was my intention, when the game could continue 25...♕g5 26 ♕xg5 hxg5 27 ♖g6 ♗d7 28 ♖xg5 ♖e8 29 ♖f3, etc.

23 ♘c7 ♕h5 24 ♗e3! ♖b8

24...♘xe4? 25 ♕f3 would be painful.

25 ♘e6

This looked super strong when I played it (both of us were counting on increment, and had under one minute on the clock until move 40), but apparently Black can just unravel slowly with 25...b5 26 ♖ad1 ♕e8 27 ♘xf8 ♕xf8 28 ♗g5 ♖b6. As such, 25 ♗a7! should have been preferred.

25...♘xe4?? 26 ♖xf8+ 1-0

Just 11 days later in another Serbian tournament, I got to deploy some more of my preparation for Damljanovic.

C.Strugnell-M.Andrijevic
Belgrade 2019
Sicilian Taimanov

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 ♘c3 a6 4 d4 cxd4 5 ♘xd4 ♕c7 6 ♗d3 ♘c6

A more solid choice than 6...♘f6 7 f4 ♗b4.

7 ♘xc6 dxc6 8 0-0 e5 9 ♗e3

9 f4 ♘f6 10 ♔h1 ♗d6 11 f5 is the alternative.

9...♘f6 10 ♘a4 ♗e6

Black can also go 10...♗g4 11 f3 ♗e6, while after 10...♘d7 I was ready with 11 c4 b5 12 cxb5 axb5 13 ♘c3 ♘c5 (or 13...♗c5 14 ♖c1) 14 ♘xb5! ♕d7! 15 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 16 ♕c2.

11 ♘c5

11 ♗b6! looks stronger, and if 11...♕c8 12 ♘c5 ♗xc5 13 ♗xc5 or 11...♕e7 12 ♘c5 ♘d7 13 ♘xd7 ♕xd7 14 ♕e2 c5 15 ♗c4 ♗xc4 16 ♕xc4 ♕c6 17 ♗a5 ♗e7 18 a4 0-0 19 ♖fd1, with a grip on the position.

11...♗xc5

11...♗c8 would have avoided ceding the two bishops.

12 ♗xc5 ♘d7 13 ♗e3 0-0 14 ♕e2

14...♖fe8

If 14...b5 15 c4!?, and not 15 a4 c5 16 axb5? c4.

15 a4 b5 16 axb5 axb5 17 ♕d2 ♕d6 18 ♖fd1 ♖ed8 19 ♕e1 20 ♖xa1 h6

I had been hoping for 20...♘c5 21 ♕b4! ♘b7 (and not 21...♘xd3? 22 ♕xd6) 22 ♕xd6 ♘xd6 23 b3, with a very pleasant endgame indeed thanks to the bishop-pair.

21 ♕a5 ♖b8 22 ♗e2

Remaining alert to such possibilities as 22 b3? ♗xb3.

22...♕f8 23 b3! ♕c8 24 f3

I was in no rush, but it was also possible to go up a gear with 24 f4!.

24...♕b7 25 ♕e1 ♖a8 26 ♖a5 ♖xa5 27 ♕xa5 ♕b8 28 ♔f2 ♔h7 29 g3 ♘f6 30 ♕c3 ♕d6 31 ♕c5

31...♕xc5

Consenting to my ideal endgame rather than allow 31...♕c7? 32 ♗xb5.

32 ♗xc5 ♘d7 33 ♗d6 g5 34 ♔e3 h5 35 f4 gxf4+ 36 gxf4 exf4+ 37 ♔xf4 ♔g6 38 h4 f6 39 ♗d3

39 ♗f3 c5 40 ♗e2 c4 41 b4 was another way of doing things, intending ♗f3 and e4-e5 to go after b5.

39...♔f7 40 e5 ♘xe5

40...fxe5+ 41 ♗xe5 ♘c5 42 ♗e2 ♘xb3? doesn't draw in view of 43 ♗xh5+!.

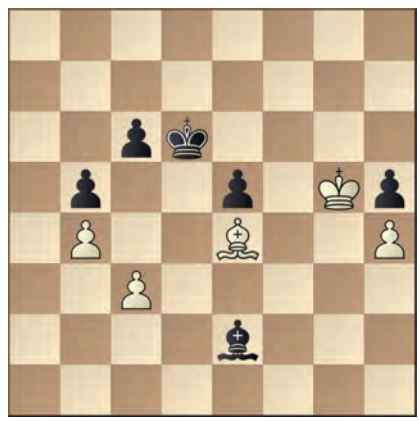
41 ♗xe5 fxe5+ 42 ♔g5??

I was trying not to be materialistic, but 42 ♔xe5 b4 (both 42...♗g4 43 b4 ♔e7 44 ♗e4 and 42...♔e7 43 ♗e2 ♗f7 44 ♔f5 are also hopeless for Black) 43 ♔d6 ♗d5 44 ♗c4! ♗xc4 45 bxc4 should not have been too hard to calculate, even on a boiling hot day.

42...♗g4 43 ♗g6+ ♔e6 44 b4

I had no desire to lose with 44 ♗xh5?? ♗xh5 45 ♔xh5 ♔f5.

44...♗d1 45 ♗e4 ♔d6 46 c3 ♗e2



47 ♗g6??

47 ♔f5 was necessary, but with limited time left I thought I was being clever and would draw after 47...♗f3 48 ♗xh5 e4 49 ♗g4! ♔d5 50 h5 ♗xg4 51 h6!.

47...♔e6?

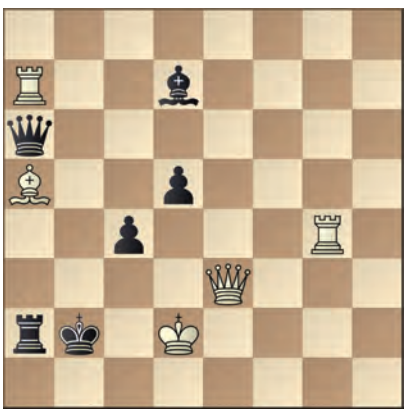
Now we repeat, but he might have won with 47...♔d5 48 ♗xh5 ♗xh5 49 ♔xh5 e4 50 ♔g4 ♔c4 when I'm a tempo short.

48 ♗e4 ♔d6 49 ♗g6? ½-½

Studies
with Stephenson

Chess composers like to remember the birthdays of other chess composers and in this issue I feature two studies, each composed to celebrate countrymen. We start with a lively study by two regular contributors to this magazine, Yochanan Afek and Amatzia Avni, who won an award in a tournament to celebrate the 70th birthday of Israeli composer Yehuda Hoch in 2016. Black is to play and White is to win.

Y. Afek & A. Avni
3rd Comm. Hoch-70 JT, 2016



Black to play, White to win

1...d4

A move that forces White to play a series of 9 'only' moves to win, which is why it is preferred to other moves in this composed endgame study.

2 ♕xd4+

And so begins a series of four consecutive checks. After 2 ♖xa6? Black can draw with 2...dxe3+ 3 ♔xe3 ♖a3+ 4 ♔f4 ♗xg4 5 ♔xg4 ♔c2.

2...c3+ 3 ♗xc3+

Both 3 ♔e3? ♕h6+ 4 ♕f4 ♕h3+ 5 ♖g3 ♕e6+ 6 ♕e4 ♕h6+ and 3 ♔e1? ♖a1+ 4 ♔f2 ♕f1+ 5 ♔g3 ♕g1+ allow Black to draw.

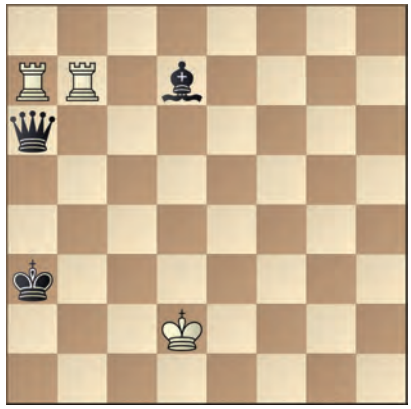
3...♔b3+ 4 ♗b2!

And now a sacrifice.

4...♖xb2+

After 4...♕h6+ 5 ♔e1 ♕e6+ 6 ♖e4 White prevails.

5 ♕xb2+ ♔xb2 6 ♖b4+! ♔a3 7 ♖bb7!

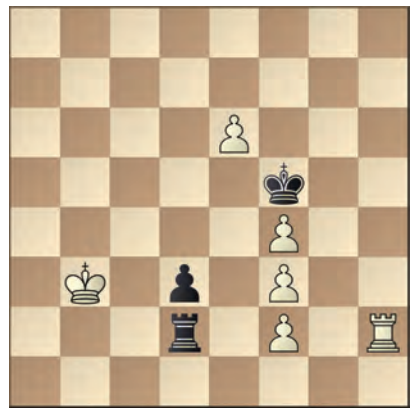


Now Black has a choice. If **7...♗b5 8 ♖xa6+ ♗xa6 9 ♖a7** Black's bishop is pinned and won on a6, while if **7...♕xa7 8 ♖xa7+ ♗a4 9 ♔c3** Black's bishop is pinned and won on a4.

Check, counter check, sacrifice and finally Black's last piece is lost. Exciting play from these two experienced composers.

Ukrainian composer Nikolay Kondratiuk died in 2001 and in 2018 a tournament was held to celebrate what would have been his 70th birthday. The Ukrainian composer Valdislav Tarasiuk, who regularly features in tourney awards, got a commend for the following study, which is for you to solve.

V. Tarasiuk
1st Comm., Kondratiuk-70 MT, 2018



White to play and win

To enter email matt@chess.co.uk or send your name and address, with the main variations, to Chess & Bridge Ltd., 44 Baker Street, London, W1U 7RT, postmarked no later than 1st November. £30 of products from Chess & Bridge are available for the first correct entry drawn.

Overseas News

BELGIUM – IM Simon Ansell did well to find himself on top board in the final round at the Eastman Open in Ghent (20-24 July), which is just a small part of the vast Gentse Feesten. However, in a thrilling endgame played almost solely on increment and in sweltering heat, Ansell missed a couple of chances and unfortunately went down to defeat in some 108 moves to the Belgian Grandmaster Bart Michiels, who was placed second on tie-break behind Daniel Fernandez, who thus scooped the €1,400 first prize. Azeri GM Azer Mirzoev also scored 7½/9, with Danny Gormally half a point back.

CHINA – Ding Liren was surprisingly defeated by Dmitry Andreikin, as the pair battled for the Xinqiao Cup in Wenzhou (15-18 July). Andreikin showcased his defensive skills in the opening game ahead of winning in just 30 moves with his favourite Yates variation (9 d4) of the Ruy Lopez before holding tight in the final two games to belie a rating difference of some 85 points.

CZECH REPUBLIC – The Czech Open once again attracted over a thousand players to Pardubice, of which some 323 competed in the Pardubice Open (19-27 July). Czech Grandmaster Jiri Stocek triumphed with 7½/9 to finish half a point ahead of his more fancied compatriot Viktor Laznicka, as well as Sergei Movsesian and Jorden van Foreest. The ever-dangerous Scottish FM Alan Tate had an excellent tournament, gaining some 33 rating points for his 6/9.

This year the huge festival also included the European Youth Team Chess Championship (11-17 July), in which Germany won the Under-18 Open, with the Mark Hebden-coached England back in eighth, despite fine performances on boards 2 and 3 from Borna Derakhshani and Harry

Grieve. England also finished eighth in the Under-12 Open, even though all of Peter Wells's charges (Shreyas Royal, Savin Dias, James Merriman, Nishchal Thatte and Aarnavh Trivedi) gained rating points.

DENMARK – 13-year-old Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa was only the 21st seed at the Xtracon Open (20-28 July), but that didn't prevent him from racking up a mighty 8½/10. Praggnanandhaa's play reminds one of a fair bit of our current world champion, as when he ground down Anton Korobov in a bishop endgame, although he was a little fortunate to save a pawn-down queen ending against Sam Sevian in the final round. The famous tournament in Helsingør attracted a smaller British contingent than usual of which Chelmsford's Daniel Gallagher top-scored with 6/10.
Leading scores: 1 Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa (IND) 8½/10, 2-6 Aryan Tari (NOR), Gabriel Sargissian (ARM), Evgeny Postny (ISR), Samuel Sevian (USA), Allan Stig Rasmussen (DEN) 8.

FRANCE – The third leg of the 2019 Grand Chess Tour took place in Paris (27 July - 1 August). Each Tour participant only takes part in three of the five speed events and with Magnus absent, the top players at last had a chance in 2019 of winning first prize. Surprisingly Hikaru Nakamura began with defeats against Fabiano Caruana and Alexander Grischuk, in contrast to which Maxime Vachier-Lagrave defeated Daniil Dubov and Shak Mamedyarov, and both with Black. Nakamura rallied a little on the second and third days, but the home favourite only lost to Ian Nepomniachtchi to finish on 13/18, a point ahead of Alexander Grischuk and some three points more than Nepomniachtchi and Vishy Anand could muster.

Maxime Vachier-Lagrave and Levon Aronian have a friendly rivalry. Both would finish joint first in the Saint Louis Rapid, with Aronian prevailing overall after the Blitz. Full details next time.

J.K.Duda-M.Vachier-Lagrave
Paris (rapid) 2019
Sicilian Moscow

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 ♗b5+ ♘d7 4 d4 cxd4 5 ♕xd4 a6 6 ♗xd7+ ♗xd7 7 ♗g5

This runs into a powerful sequence, so White should prefer 7 c4, 7 0-0 or 7 ♘c3.

7...h6 8 ♗h4 ♕a5+ 9 ♘c3 e5 10 ♕d3 g5! 11 ♗g3 ♘f6 12 h4 g4 13 ♘d2 ♖c8 14 h5 ♗e6

Black already enjoys a pleasant position, with control of d5 and pressure on the c-file.

15 ♗h4!? ♘xh5 16 g3 ♖g8

17 ♘d5?

This quickly backfires, whereas after 17 ♘f1 and if 17...♖c4 18 ♘d2 ♖d4 19 ♕e3 followed by 0-0-0 White would have enjoyed sufficient play for his pawn.

17...f5! 18 c4 ♗xd5 19 cxd5 f4 20 a4 ♕b6 21 b3?

The final mistake. Black now takes over the whole board.

21...♕b4 22 ♔d1 ♖c3 23 ♕e2 f3 0-1

Duda can scarcely move and had unsurprisingly seen enough; ...♖g7–c7 will follow.

Perhaps not helped by a rest day, Vachier-Lagrave unusually wobbled come the closing double-round blitz tournament, but he just about managed to hang on to his overall lead. MVL finished on only '-2', but nobody really hit top form as Anand, Nakamura and Jan-Krzysztof Duda shared first place on 10½/18. That all meant that the French star triumphed overall, finishing half a point ahead of Anand, with Grischuk and Nepomniachtchi a further half-point in arrears.

The game of the whole event was an enthralling battle between Duda's maximalist and highly creative play and Grischuk's counter-attacking defence.

J.K.Duda-A.Grischuk
Paris (rapid) 2019
Reti Opening

1 ♘f3 d5 2 c4 d4 3 b4 f6 4 e3 e5 5 c5!?

It's hardly to fully believe in this ambitious line, but it remains quite topical, especially at grandmaster level.

5...a5 6 ♕a4+

Best, seeing that 6 ♘xe5?! fxe5 7 ♕h5+ ♔d7 8 ♕f5+ ♔e7 9 ♕xe5+ ♗e6 10 ♗c4

Grand Chess Tour Paris - Rapidplay, Friday 26th July - Friday 2nd August 2019 (Category 21, average rating = 2763 Elo)

	Player	Country	Rating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Pts	TPR
1	Maxime Vachier-Lagrave	FRA	2775	*	½	0	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	6½	2927
2	Alexander Grischuk	RUS	2766	½	*	1	½	0	1	1	½	1	½	6	2887
3	Ian Nepomniachtchi	RUS	2775	1	0	*	0	1	1	1	0	½	½	5	2804
4	Viswanathan Anand	IND	2764	½	½	1	*	½	½	½	0	½	1	5	2805
5	Jan-Krzysztof Duda	POL	2729	0	1	0	½	*	0	½	1	½	1	4½	2766
6	Fabiano Caruana	USA	2819	0	0	0	½	1	*	1	1	½	½	4½	2756
7	Hikaru Nakamura	USA	2754	½	0	0	½	½	0	*	1	1	½	4	2720
8	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	AZE	2765	0	½	1	1	0	0	0	*	0	1	3½	2682
9	Daniil Dubov	RUS	2700	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	1	*	½	3½	2689
10	Anish Giri	NED	2779	0	½	½	0	0	½	½	0	½	*	2½	2594

♕d7 has been shown not to give White quite enough for his piece.

6...♕d7 7 ♗b5 c6 8 ♗c4 ♘a6 9 exd4 e4!

Fighting for the initiative rather than face a strong lead in development after 9...exd4 10 0–0 axb4 11 ♖e1+ ♔d8 12 a3!.

10 b5 ♘b4 11 a3

11 bxc6!? also seems quite promising, since after 11...bxc6 12 a3 exf3 13 axb4, unlike in the game, Black cannot take on d4 in view of 13...♕xd4? 14 ♕xc6+ ♔d8 15 ♕xa8 ♕xa1 16 0-0! ♕xb1 17 ♕xa5+ with a mating attack.

11...exf3 12 axb4 ♕xd4 13 d3 ♕e5+ 14 ♗e3 fxg2 15 ♖g1 ♘e7

A new try, although clearly Grischuk had been caught out, not deliberately aimed for this position. Black also suffered after 15...♕xh2 16 bxc6 ♕xg1+ (16...b5!? 17 cxb6 ♗xb4+ 18 ♔e2 ♕xg1 19 ♘d2 ♗g4+ 20 f3 ♕h2 21 ♖g1 leaves Black a whole rook ahead, but completely powerless against the pawn duo on b6 and c6) 17 ♔d2 in Hillarp Persson-Hector, Danish League 2014.

16 ♘d2 ♗d7 17 bxa5!?

Continuing his ambitious play, but both here and on the last move there was absolutely nothing wrong with 17 ♖xg2.

17...♘d5 18 d4!?

Continuing to raise the stakes and ensure a battle between White's queenside majority and Black's on the other flank. Instead, 18 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 19 b6 ♕xd3 20 ♖xg2 ♔f7 would have been more sedate and likely about equal.

18...♕xh2 19 ♘f3 ♕h5 20 a6! ♗e7 21 axb7!

Stunning if also consistent play from the rapidly rising Polish star.

21...♖xa4 22 ♖xa4 0-0 23 ♖a8

21-year-old Polish star Jan-Krzysztof Duda looked far from out of place at the Paris Rapid and Blitz. Rated 2730, this highly creative player is up to 24th place on the live rating list.

If you like your wine, it must be worth considering playing at the well-established Open des Vins. Where else are the prizes only in wine and the winners have to sit on a pair of scales?

Black is queen for rook ahead, still has his trump on g2 and the knight on f3 hangs, but what to do about the powerful b7-pawn?

23...♖e8?

Not this. 23...♕xf3 24 ♖xf8+ ♗xf8 25 bxc6 ♗xc6 26 b8♕ would have left White better, albeit with Black still fighting, but correct was 23...cxb5! 24 ♗b3 ♕xf3 25 ♖xf8+ ♗xf8 26 b8♕ ♗g4 27 ♕xb5 h5 28 ♔d2 ♔h8 when the calm silicon displays its favourite '0.00' and absolutely anything might have happened in practice.

24 ♔d2! ♔f8 25 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8 26 ♗xd5!

Avoiding a deeply hidden tactic, namely 26 ♖a1? ♘b6!!, which would likely have reversed the result since 27 cxb6 ♗b4+ 28 ♔c2 ♗d6 should be winning for Black.

26...♗d8

The b-pawn will also queen after 26...cxd5 27 ♗f4, while 26...♕b8 fails to 27 bxc6 ♗g4 28 ♖a1.

27 ♗f4 ♗a5+ 28 ♔d1 1-0

Phil Neatherway reports from the Open des Vins in Hourtin (26 June - 6 July), in the Medoc region, north-west of Bordeaux.

"This tournament is unusual in that there are no money prizes. Instead, the prizes are all wine, and for the first six places, the prizes are based on the player's weight. The winner gets their weight in 'bon vin du Medoc', second receives half their weight and so on down to sixth. This year's winner was local player FM Pablo Ollier who finished a point clear on 8/9, in a field of 63 players. Australian IM Alex Wohl was seventh on tie-break, but won the veteran's prize by way of consolation. Two English players took part: Barry Hymer of Lancaster, who scored a very creditable 6/9 and won the 1801-2000 grading prize, and myself, scoring 5/9. The tournament was organised by the indefatigable Rike Wohlers-Armas. Everyone is very friendly and I would certainly recommend it to any English visitors who might be in the area next year."

GERMANY – Recent U.S. acquisition Leinier Dominguez Perez entered the world top-ten after his victory at the 47th Dortmund Sparkassen (13-21 July), an event which felt a little strange without the participation of

Vladimir Kramnik. Dominguez smoothly outplayed Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu before annihilating Ian Nepomniachtchi, which left the Russian on '-1' after three rounds. Nisipeanu would go on to play a major role in determining the overall standings: he held a lost queen and rook endgame against Wojtaszek, which likely denied the Pole a share of first, while seeing his Petroff annihilated by Nepomniachtchi as the never dull Russian rallied to claim second place on a tie-break of 'most wins'.

Since becoming registered for the U.S. Leinier Dominguez has been pretty active, including winning Dortmund. The USA must now have every chance of Gold at the 2020 Olympiad.

L.Dominguez Perez-
I.Nepomniachtchi
Dortmund 2019
Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 dxc5

Another dangerous line against Black's provocative third move is 4 ♘f3 ♘c6 5 c4, as Michael Adams makes a good case for earlier in these pages.

4...e6 5 ♗d3 ♗xc5 6 ♕g4 ♘e7 7 b4!

White has managed to pressure g7 while preparing this advance without the need for a2-a3. Nepomniachtchi's next attempts to improve over 7...♗b6 8 ♘f3 a5 when in Vitiugov-O'Donnell, Batumi Olympiad 2018, it appears that White might have grabbed: 9 ♕xg7 ♖g8 10 ♕xh7, and if 10...♖xg2 11 ♘g5! ♖xf2 12 ♖f1.

7...h5!? 8 ♕f4 ♗b6 9 ♘f3 ♘bc6 10 ♘bd2

10 0-0 a5 11 ♘c3!? was a sharper option, sacrificing a pawn for a lead in development after 11...axb4 12 ♘b5.

10...a5 11 b5 ♘b4 12 ♗a3!

12...♘xd3+

A big decision as now White's control of the a3-f8 diagonal will prove quite annoying. The silicon's 12...♖h6!? 13 0-0 (13 ♗xb4 ♘g6! 14 ♗xg6 ♖xg6 is an amazing intermezzo, intending 15 ♗d6? ♖g4 to trap the white queen) 13...♘g6 is rather ugly, but after 14 ♕g3 h4 15 ♕g4 f5 16 exf6 ♕xf6 Black is very active and should have enough counterplay.

13 cxd3 ♗d7 14 ♕a4 ♘f5

Beginning an aggressive approach on the kingside. 14...♘c8!? 15 0-0 ♘a7 16 ♖ab1 g5 (Pein) was another way of doing that, and the simple 14...f6 15 0-0 0-0 16 ♕h4 ♕e8 seems OK for Black.

15 ♖c1 g5!? 16 h3

White must maintain his knight on f3.

16...♖c8 17 ♖xc8 ♕xc8 18 ♔e2!

The king wouldn't have been safe on g1, so Dominguez elects to leave it in the centre while rushing his remaining rook over to the open c-file.

18...♕b8

At first 18...f6?! 19 exf6 ♕c3 appears strong, but it runs into 20 f7+! ♔xf7 21 ♘xg5+ and even after 18...♕d8 19 ♘b3 ♖g8 20 g4! ♘h4 21 ♘xh4 gxh4 22 ♘d2! Black seems to come up just short.

19 ♘b3 ♕a7? 20 ♖c1! g4?

Nepomniachtchi will regret opening the kingside, but he had to avoid 20...♗xf2? 21 ♖c8+! ♗xc8 22 b6+, which reveals the whole point of Dominguez's play. Once again, 20...♖g8 is well met by 21 g4!, but even undoing Black's mistaken last with 20...♕b8 seems to come too late to save the game: for example, 21 ♘c5 ♗c8 22 ♗b2 ♗xc5 23 ♖xc5 b6 24 ♖c1 ♖g8 25 g4 hxg4 26 hxg4 ♘e7 27 ♗a3 and White's control of the dark squares proves decisive.

21 hxg4 hxg4 22 ♕xg4 ♗xf2

Of course, the b-pawn was taboo in view of 22...♗xb5? 23 ♖c8+ ♗d8 24 ♘fd4

47th Dortmund Sparkassen - Germany, Sat 13th July - Sunday 21st July 2019

	Player	Country	Rating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Pts	TPR
1	Leinier Dominguez Perez	USA	2760	#	1	½	½	½	1	½	½	4.5	2799
2	Ian Nepomniachtchi	RUS	2775	0	#	½	0	½	1	1	1	4	2744
3	Radoslaw Wojtaszek	POL	2737	½	½	#	½	½	½	½	1	4	2750
4	Richard Rapport	HUN	2735	½	1	½	#	½	½	½	½	4	2750
5	Teimour Radjabov	AZE	2759	½	½	½	½	#	1	½	½	4	2747
6	Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu	GER	2672	0	0	½	½	0	#	½	1	2.5	2607
7	Kaido Kulaots	EST	2560	½	0	½	½	½	½	#	0	2.5	2623
8	Daniel Fridman	GER	2638	½	0	0	½	½	0	1	#	2.5	2612

♘xd4+ 25 ♘xd4 ♗d7 26 ♖c1 with overwhelming control. The threat is ♕g7 and 26...♗e7 27 ♕g7 ♖f8 28 ♗xe7 ♔xe7 cleaned up by 29 ♕f6+ ♔e8 30 ♘b5!.

23 ♘c5 ♗g3

Once again, Black couldn't afford to cede control of the dark squares, 23...♗xc5 24 ♗xc5 b6 failing to the lovely 25 ♖h1!.

24 ♖h1! ♖f8

It's mate next move if 24...♖xh1? 25 ♕g8+ ♔e7 26 ♘xb7+. **25 ♖h5 1-0**

There's nothing much to be done about the threat of ♖xf5.

HOLLAND – Former Russian chess official Ilya Levitov celebrated turning 40 by inviting a number of famous names to contest blitz and rapid tournaments in Amsterdam (3-6 August). Vladimir Kramnik was lured out of retirement and began by sharing first place on 5/7 in the blitz with his great friend and rival, Vishy Anand. Notably youth did not have any advantage; Ian Nepomniachtchi finishing on 50% and Anish Giri joint last on 2/7. However, things were somewhat different in the ensuing rapid event, as Nepomniachtchi shared first place with Alexander Grischuk, with Giri back in third and Kramnik only managing '-2'.

IRELAND – FM Conor Murphy was only the sixth seed at the Irish Championship in Dublin (3-11 August), and suffered a surprise defeat against Stephen Moran in the fourth round. However, the Cambridge University student would finish like a train, winning his last five games to run away with the tournament, including defeats of the first and third seeds, Sam Collins and Alex Lopez.

Leading scores: 1 Conor Murphy 7½/9, 2-3 Alex Lopez, Sam Collins 6½, 4-6 Stephen Brady, Joe Ryan, Colm Daly 6.

LATVIA – Alongside the FIDE Grand Prix in Riga, Vladimir Fedoseev won a strong rapid event, the Tal Memorial (16-17 July), finishing with 9½/11 half a point ahead of David Navara, who joined in after being eliminated by Maxime Vachier-Lagrave in the Grand Prix. There was also a blitz tournament, which was won in some style by the Latvian no.1, Igor Kovalenko, with 12/13, with Fedoseev back on 10½ and Alexei Shirov one player a further half-point adrift.

NORWAY – Aryan Tari won his second Norwegian Championship after edging out Jon Ludwig Hammer on tie-break in Larvik (5-14 July), after the pair had finished on 6½/9, just half a point ahead of IM Kristian Holm and GM Benjamin Notkevich. The Championship was, however, overshadowed by a vote on whether the Norwegian Chess Federation should accept a sponsorship deal from betting company Kindred Group. Magnus Carlsen campaigned for a 'yes' vote, whereas the likes of Simen Agdestein and Torbjørn Hansen were opposed to it. In the end the Norwegian delegates rejected the deal by some 132 votes to 44.

SWITZERLAND – The famous Biel Chess Festival was the latest to trial a combination of time controls in its top section, beginning with a rapid tournament (wins worth two points), followed by four rounds of classical chess (three points for a win), a double-round blitz tournament (one point per win), and then the final three rounds of the classical event.

Making a welcome appearance, Peter Leko top-scored with an unbeaten 10/14 in the rapid to finish a point ahead of Sam Shankland, with Parham Maghsoodloo and Vidit Gujrathi a further point behind. Vidit racked up an impressive 11/14 to claim top honours in the blitz, finishing a point ahead of Shankland and with Leko only managing '-1', which effectively turned a three-horse race into a straight duel.

The fifth classical round proved pivotal, Vidit crushing Sebastian Bogner while Shankland was outplayed by the ever-dangerous Jorge Cori. Vidit dominated the classical rounds to finish with 15/21 in that sphere, including a fine positional victory over Leko no less, with 14-year-old prodigy Nodirbek Abdusattorov doing extremely well to finish just ahead of Leko and Shankland.

Overall scores: 1 Vidit Gujrathi (IND) 34/49, 2 Sam Shankland (USA) 28, 3 Peter Leko (HUN) 25½, 4 Parham Maghsoodloo (IRI) 24½, 5 Nodirbek Abdusattorov (UZB) 23, 6 Jorge Cori (PER) 22, 7 Nico Georgiadis 15, 8 Sebastian Bogner (both SUI) 12.

S.Vidit-S.Bogner
Biel 2019
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 a6 5 e3 ♗f5 6 ♘h4 ♗g4 7 ♕c2

White angles to win the bishop-pair, but Black is able to find a way to inflict some structural damage in return.

7...e6 8 h3 ♗h5 9 g4 ♘fd7! 10 gxh5 ♕xh4 11 ♗d2 dxc4 12 ♗xc4 c5!?

Thus far Bogner was well prepared as he attempted to improve over 12...♕xh5 13 ♗e2 ♕h4 14 0-0-0 with promising compensation in Gledura-E.Paehtz, Wijk aan Zee 2019.

13 0-0-0 ♘c6 14 ♖hg1! cxd4 15 exd4 ♕xd4 16 ♘e4 ♘c5 17 ♘g5

Menacing a timely blow on f7 or e6, but initially Bogner responds well.

17...♘e5! 18 ♗e2 ♘ed3+?

The decisive mistake. Black also had to avoid 18...♕xf2 19 ♗c3 h6 20 ♘xf7! ♘xf7? (20...♕f4+ 21 ♔b1 ♘xf7 22 b4! ♕e4! 23 bxc5 ♕xc2+ 24 ♔xc2 ♖c8 fights on) 21 ♗b5+!, but 18...h6! 19 ♗e3 ♕a4 would have left everything to play for in this highly unbalanced and open position.

19 ♔b1 ♘b4

Now White seizes an initiative he'll never let go of, but 19...♘xf2 20 ♗c3 ♕a4 21 b3 ♕f4 22 ♖df1 would have won material.

20 ♗xb4 ♕xb4 21 ♖g4! ♕b6 22 h6! g6 23 ♕c3 ♖g8 24 ♘xh7 ♗xh6 25 ♘f6+ ♔e7 26 ♖b4 ♕a5 27 ♘e4 ♖ac8

After this White invades with decisive effect, but if 27...♘xe4? 28 ♖xb7+.

28 ♕f6+ ♔f8 29 ♘d6 ♖c7 30 ♘c4! 1-0

The queen is lost after 30...♕xb4 31 ♖d8#. 30 ♘f5! would have been even more clinical.

USA – Magnus Carlsen was enduring something of a meltdown as the Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz leg of the Grand Chess Tour drew to a close as we prepared to go to print. Full details next time. A little before Rex Sinquefield's club had hosted both the U.S. Senior and U.S. Junior Championships (Open and Girls), three rather competitive all-play-alls. 2592-rated top seed Awonder Liang needed a rapid play-off to overcome Nicolas Checa and claim his third consecutive U.S. Junior title – not bad going considering that Liang is still only 16. 15-year-old Carissa Yip also retained her Girls title, finishing half a point ahead of fellow WIM Rochelle Wu.

It should be said, however, that many were interested not so much in the games of the stars of the future as the action on the board in the first invitational U.S. Senior Championship, which featured a collection of household names. At 51 Alexander Shabalov was the youngest participant and is still more than capable of wild, attacking chess. 'Shabba' was, however, fairly solid at times in Saint Louis, which enabled him to claim the $12,000 top prize with an unbeaten 6/9, finishing a point clear of Grigory Kaidanov and Alexander Goldin, with Larry Christiansen, Alex Yermolinsky and Joel Benjamin back on 50%.

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Home News

BASINGSTOKE – Under his 'GM Chess' brand Nick Pert put on an Under-2200 Congress at the Basingstoke Country Hotel (6-7 July), which was won by Steven Jones (Basingstoke) with 4½/5, who finished half a point ahead of Oliver Howell (Coulsdon). There was also an Under-1900 section, won by Aaron Saunders (Bristol) with 4½/5, with Peter Dove (Newbury), Sanjit Kumar (Richmond) and Shardul Godbole (India) sharing second place.

CANTERBURY – We unfortunately made a small error at the end of James Essinger's fine article, 'Playing Chess Below Canterbury Cathedral', last month. The article was in memory of Rupert David Essinger (May 2nd 1961 - January 22nd 2019).

COPTHORNE – Nick Pert would withdraw from the British after being defeated by his twin brother Richard in round 7, but had earlier warmed up for Torquay at the Weald Congress (13-14 July).
Open: 1-2 Oleg Korneev (Spain), Nick Pert (Sandhurst) 4½/5, 3-4 David Graham (Worthing), Mike Waddington (Dorchester) 4.
Major: 1-2 Tim Hilton (Oldham), Vladimirs Bovtramovics (Woking) 4½, 3-5 George Neale (Worthing), Mark Whitehead (Rochdale), Peter Davies (East Glamorgan) 4.
Intermediate: 1 Lee Bullock (Hackney) 4½, 2-5 Susan Chadwick (Brighton), David Agostinelli (Southampton), Paul O'Brien (Worthing), Hector Denfield (London) 4.
Minor: 1-2 Oliver Stockham (Sussex), Chris Smith (Bristol) 4½, 3-5 John Brooke (Bingley), Peter Crosby (Horsham), Norman Hawkins (East Grinstead) 4.

DUNDALK – France edged out the Netherlands due to having won their head-to-head encounter at the Glorney Cup, which was held in County Louth (22-24 July), just to the south of the border between the Republic and Northern Ireland (our apologies to Irish readers for not being able to fit this into *Overseas News*). Both sides finished on 4/5 and 17½/25, a point ahead of England and Ireland. The Gilbert Cup (formerly the Faber) also went to the wire, with England just edging out France on board points due in no small part to the 4½/5 racked up by both Cassie Graham and Mahima Raghavendra on boards 1 and 2.

England dominated the Robinson Cup, winning all five matches, with Jacob Yoon and Tristian See top-scoring with '+4', while Aaravamudhan Balaji made 4/5 on top board. However, England had to settle for second behind the Netherlands in the Stokes Cup, despite Luca Buanne amassing 4½/5. Alongside the junior tournaments, an all-play-all was held which Icelandic FM Vignir Stefansson won with 7/9, making an IM norm while finishing half a point ahead of Gavin Wall and Joseph McPhillips.

Sohum Lohia is a name to watch out for and won both the Under-10 and Under-11 British titles.

EDINBURGH – Top seed Matthew Turner triumphed at the Scottish Championship held at Stewart's Melville College in Edinburgh (6-14 July). Turner's federation has been Scottish for a number of years now, so he was able to become Scottish Champion after tying for first place with Latvian FM Ritvars Reimanis, who bounced back strongly after an early defeat against Danny Gormally.
Leading scores: 1-2 Matthew Turner (Street), Ritvars Reimanis (Edinburgh) 7/9, 3-6 Danny Gormally (Alnwick), Colin McNab (Glasgow), Alan Tate (Edinburgh), Tim Wall (Newcastle) 6½, 7-10 Alexandru-Bogdan Banzea (Romania), David Eggleston (Durham), Adam Bremner (Aberdeen), Declan Shafi (Castlehill) 6.

HASTINGS – We were delighted to see that the future of the famous Hastings International Congress is secure after the tournament gained the backing of Caplin, an IT company who specialise in creating trading software and technology for financial institutions. This year will be the 99th Hastings Congress and will take place from December 28th until January 5th. See www.hastingschess.com for more details.

LONDON – FM John Richardson triumphed at the latest Golders Green Rapidplay on August 3rd.
Open: 1 John Richardson (Hendon) 5/6, 2-4 Pjotrs Kolasa (Latvia), Chris Gant (Athenaeum), Ilia Malinovskii (Russia) 4½.
Major: 1 Jason Rihel (London) 5, 2 Andrew Hayler (West London) 4½, 3 Han-Sen Choong (Hampstead) 4.
Minor: 1 Vladimir Bovtramovics (Woking) 6, 2 Claudio Oliveri (Hendon) 5, 3 Asha Jina (Harpenden) 4½.
Amateur: 1 Adah Simon Ogah (Harrow) 5, 2-3 Faye Ainscow (Kings Head), Rebecca Carter (Barnet) 4½.
Improvers: 1-3 William Ellinger (Brighton), Djuna Tree (Kingston), Hari Singh (Wimbledon) 5.
Under-80: 1-2 Quentin Wang (Hampstead), Seylon Kumaran (Barnet) 4½, 3-4 Alex Istari, Eliya Istari (both Edgware) 4½.

Meanwhile back on County Championship Finals day, July 13th, FM William Claridge-Hansen had warmed up for the British by visiting Golders Green.
Open: 1-2 William Claridge-Hansen (Exeter), Athar Ansari (Newport) 5/6, 3-6 David Zakarian (Oxford), Andrew Lewis (Manningtree), Hans-Peter Hansen (Buckinghamshire), Roman Ismailov (Barking) 4½.
Major: 1 Tim Joslin (Ealing) 5½, 2 Neil Staples (Banbury) 4½, 3-8 Julian Llewellyn (Kings Head), Graham Cole (Cowley), Andrew Hayler (West London), Niall Clarke (Borehamwood), Han-Sen Choong (Hampstead), Luca Buanne (Battersea) 4.
Minor: 1 Georgi Aleksiev (Bulgaria) 5½, 2-3 David McNish (Enfield), Alexander Funk (Hendon) 4½.
Amateur: 1-2 Michael Corbett (Aylesbury),

Radha Ratnesan (Surbiton) 5, 3-4 Jeff Fleischer (Croydon), Faye Ainscow (Kings Head) 4½.
Improvers: 1-3 Djuna Tree (Kingston), David May (Norwich), Kapya Sakala (Sussex) 5.
Under-80: 1 Guy Levy (Middlesex) 6, 2 Deniz Ozdenoren (Barnet) 5, 3-4 Vassily Sagyaman (Coventry), James Cowan (Hertfordshire) 4.

And, finally, back on June 14th, Ilia Malinovskii had scooped the top honours.
Open: 1 Ilia Malinovskii (Russia) 5½, 2 John Richardson (Hendon) 5, 3 Charles Tippleston (Northampton) 4½.
Major: 1 Kennan Kesterson (Richmond) 5½, 2 Ian Deswarte (Guildford) 5, 3 George Clarkson (Barnet) 4½.
Minor: 1 Salvatore Pepe 5, 2-3 Claudio Oliveri (both Hendon), Rian Sarkar (Barnet) 4½.
Amateur: 1 Mihaite-Vasile Focsa (Romania) 5½, 2-3 Ole Pedersen (Norway), Charles Sturt (Hammersmith) 4½.
Improvers: 1-3 Frank Usher (Dulwich), Gul Kapur (Enfield), Martin Scott (London) 5.
Under-80: 1 Conor O'Sullivan (Barnet) 5, 2-4 Ishaan Patel (Barnet), Jai Kothari (Coulsdon), Kush Patel (Surrey) 4.

Elsewhere in the capital Charles Chakanyuka (Watford) triumphed with 4½/5 at the latest Hampstead Under-2200 Congress (10-11 August), finishing half a point ahead of Aaravamudhan Balaji (Coulsdon). Timothy Davis (Farnham) also made '+4' in the Under-1900, to edge out Nicolas Mohnblatt (Imperial College) and Lukas Orgler (Barnet) by a half-point, while in the Under-135 Michal Kajda (Newham), Mohammad Farahi-Far (Barnet) and Kumar Banerji (Richmond) shared top honours on 4/5.

A little earlier, on July 23rd, Nasir Rizvi (Coulsdon) had triumphed at the Muswell Hill Rapidplay, racking up 5½/6 to edge out Alex Ethelontis (Barnet) by half a point. In the Major Oliver Finnegan (Loughton) prevailed with 5½/6, which was a point more than Jeremy Brockes (Hampstead) managed, while the Minor was won by Martin Jones (Oswestry) with that same score, with Adah Simon Ogah (Harrow) and Nick Goulbourne (Hendon) back on 4½.

Jovica Radovanovic (Sandhurst) and Gavin Wall (Richmond) shared first place with 5/6 in the Kingston Rapidplay of July 27th. Yasser Tello (Wimbledon) won the Under-160 with 5½/6, edging out Jacques Tivillier (Mushrooms) by half a point, while the Under-120 saw Henry Shaw (Crowborough), William Ellinger (Brighton) and Ashley Wilson (Epson) tie for first on 5/6.

SOUTH SHIELDS – David Walker (Leam Lane) was defeated by fellow FM Charlie Storey (Jesmond) at the South Shields FIDE-rated Blitz on July 6th, but still won the tournament with 8/9. Storey was held to a draw by Malaysian Law Zhe Kang and defeated in the final round by South Shields Champion David Mooney, who would finish third on 7/9.

TELFORD – Mark Hebden proved too strong for the chasing pack which included the future Irish Champion at the latest 4NCL Congress in Telford (19-21 July).
Open: 1 Mark Hebden (Leicester) 4½/5, 2-8 Conor Murphy (Charlton), Peter Sowray (Richmond), Adam Ashton (3Cs), Murad Abdulla (Aberdeen), Yichen Han (Newcastle), Shabir Okhai (Syston), Steven Jones (Basingstoke) 4.
Major: 1-5 Richard Bryant (Oswestry), Tim Spanton (Battersea), Tim Hilton (Oldham), Mark Whitehead (Rochdale), Martin Burns (Stockport) 4.
Minor: 1 Julian Hawthorne (Kidsgrove) 4½, 2-6 Lovinia Chidi (Wallington), Zak Tomlinson (Doncaster), Martin Jones (Haverfordwest), Peter Wood (Hastings), John Merry (Salford) 4.

TORQUAY – The British Championships proved quite a hit back at the Riviera International Centre in Torquay (26 July - 4 August). As well as a share of third, Ravi Haria also bagged the British Under-21 title, which is incorporated into the main Championship, as is the Under-18 title. That was won by Jonah Willow (West Nottingham) and Borna Derakhshani (Canterbury), who both finished on a highly creditable 5½/9. That same score was also reached by Charlie Storey (Jesmond), who made an IM norm. Deserving of a special mention too are all of Sohum Lohia, who claimed both the Under-10 and the Under-11

Forthcoming Events

Aug 30 - Sept 1 English Women's Ch., Hull
www.englishchess.org.uk/english-womens-championships-2019/

August 31 Darnall & Handsworth Rapidplay, Sheffield
www.dhchessclub.co.uk

Aug 31 - Sept 7 Paignton Congress
www.dccapaigntonchess.com or call 07759 153996

September 5 Hendon 'First Thursday' Blitz
www.hendonchessclub.com or call 07855 036537

September 7 UK Open Blitz Championship Qualifiers
www.englishchess.org.uk/uk-open-blitz-championship-2019/; events in Belfast, Birmingham, Cardiff, Edinburgh & Newcastle, as well as September 8 – Bristol, and September 14 – London & Manchester

September 7 Poplar Rapidplay
www.spanglefish.com/docklandschessclub

Sept 13-15 Bradford Congress
www.bradfordchess.co.uk or call 01274 574464

September 14 Crowborough Rapidplay
www.crowboroughchess.org

September 14 Golders Green Rapidplay
goldersgreenchess.blogspot.com or call 07855 036537

September 14 Isle of Arran U-2200 Rapidplay
congress.popmalc.org.uk/congress/46/home

September 20-22 Harrogate Congress
noelschess.weebly.com or call 07903 913786

September 20-22 Inverness Congress
congress.popmalc.org.uk/congress/45/home

September 21-22 Hampstead U2200 Congress
hampsteadchess.blogspot.com or call 07855 036537

September 24 Muswell Hill Rapidplay
muswellhillchess.blogspot.com or call 07855 036537

September 27-29 Crewe Congress
www.crewechessclub.co.uk

September 27-29 Northumberland Congress
northumberlandchesscongress.webs.com or call 07852 192072

September 29 Cambs Rapidplay, Cambridge
www.cambschess.co.uk or call 01223 872081

And for the Online Connoisseur:
Sept 9 - Oct 4 FIDE World Cup, Khanty-Mansiysk
khantymansiysk2019.fide.com/en/;
Carlsen, Caruana, Jones, McShane, etc.

Congress organisers – Don't forget to email editor@chess.co.uk to ensure your event is listed, or if you really want to guarantee a good entry, contact Matt@chess.co.uk to discuss having it advertised.

2 line caption on Ravia Haria
2 line caption on Ravia Haria

titles, veteran IM James Sherwin, who tied for first in the Rapidplay, and IM Brandon Clarke who, possibly unimpressed by the prizes in the Championship, elected to enter both the Major Open and the Morning Open. Clarke would accrue £990 whilst conceding just the one draw to Adam A. Taylor.

Major Open: 1 Brandon Clarke (Littlethorpe) 8½/9, 2-3 Adam A. Taylor (Imperial College), Max Turner (Berwick) 6½.

Under-8: 1 Elias Ruzhansky (Coulsdon) 6/6, 2-4 Kameron Grose (Barnet), Alfred Soulier (Essex), Anirudh Muppidil (Maidenhead) 5; Girls' Champion: Alannah Ashton (3Cs) 4.

Under-9: 1 Theo Khoury 6, 2-5 Soham Kumar (both Maidenhead), Jude Shearsby (Coventry), Max Bird (Barnet), Elias Ruzhansky (Coulsdon) 5; Joint Girls' Champions: Elis Denele Dicen (Coventry), Thisumi Jayawarna (Tameside) 4½.

Under-10: 1 Sohum Lohia (Battersea) 6½/7, 2 Sanjit Kumar (Richmond) 5½, 3-5 Denis Dupuis (Battersea), Elis Denele Dicen (Coventry; Girls' Champion), Max Pert (Brentwood) 5.

Under-11: 1 Sohum Lohia (Battersea) 5½/6, 2-4 George Clarkson (Barnet), Tashika Arora (Oxford; Joint Girls' Champion), Nina Pert (Brentwood, Joint Girls' Champion) 5.

Under-12: James Merriman (Orpington) 6/7, 2-4 Manvith Sandhu (Halesowen), Luke Fleri (Malta), Shivam Agrawal (Richmond) 5½; Girls' Champion: Tarini Jayawarna (Heywood) 4½.

Under-14: 1 Aaravamudhan Balaji (Orpington) 6, 2 Jacob Yoon (Ealing) 5½, 3-5 Adithya Pramod Paleri (Wimbledon), Toby Cox (Bedford), Polina Shchepinova (Sussex; Girls' Champion) 5.

Under-16: 1 Calum Salmons (Brighton) 5½, 2-4 Devan Patel (Rushall), David Phillips (Coventry), Leo Sanitt (Barnet) 5; Girls' Champion: Susanna Fraser (North Cardiff) 3½.

Under-2050: 1-5 Mike Waddington (Dorchester), Joel Bird (Muswell Hill), Tristian See (Cambridge), William Graham (Worthing), Samuel Woolacott (Rochester) 4/5.

Under-1900: 1-2 Tim Hilton (Oldham), Matthew Britnell (Lewes) 4½, 3-5 Mick Riding (Gosforth), Ben Graff (Kenilworth), Colin Ramage (Barking) 4.

Under-1750: 1-2 Matthew Howell (Coulsdon), Devan Patel (Rushall) 5, 3 Soham Kumar (Maidenhead) 4½.

Under-120: 1 Simon Sellick (Bracknell) 5, 2-5 Ben Wood (Hillsborough), Callum Smith, Ellison Smith (both North Cardiff), Roy Watson (Kenilworth), 4.

Under-100: 1 Sanjit Baber (Weybridge) 4½, 2-7 James Gibbs (Newton Abbot), Oli Garrett (Margate), Doreen Anderton (Walsall), Everson Correa (3Cs), Charlie Ball (St Albans), Joseph Whelan (Ashtead) 4.

Morning Open: 1 Brandon Clarke (Littlethorpe) 5, 2 Nugith Jayawarna (Heywood) 4, 3 Raghav Nayak (Hendon) 3½.

Weekender Atkins: 1 Aditya Verma (Coulsdon) 4½, 2-4 James Poulton (Aylesbury), Philip Tozer (Athenaeum), Mike Waddington (Dorchester) 4.

Weekender Soanes: 1 Carl Gartside (Macclesfield) 5, 2-6 Graham Ashcroft (Preston), Sydney Jacob (Lewisham), Russell Goodfellow (Tunbridge Wells), William Drennan (Battersea), Ryan Cheung (Southampton) 4.

Weekender Yates: 1-2 Chris Fraser (West Bridgford), Christopher Greenaway (Taunton) 4½, 3-5 Barry Miles (South Norwood), Philip Owen (Chippenham), Daniel Gliddon (Couldsdon) 4.

Rapidplay: 1-2 Andrew Lewis (Manningtree), James Sherwin (Bradford-on-Avon) 7½/9, 3-4 Tim Paulden (Exeter), Daniel Sutton (Harvard) 7.

Blitz: 1-2 Keith Arkell (Paignton), Matthew Payne (Worthing) 8/9, 3 Stephen Jones (Basingstoke) 7.

Also a Tie!

David Friedgood of Finchley, Brian Hewson of Tiverton and Mark Page of Kenilworth tied for first in the British Over-65 Championship.. Friedgood and Hewson drew in the final round, which enabled Page to catch up by defeating Ken Norman – the British Championship stalwart lost his final two games to fall back to 4½/7, a point behind the winners.

R.De Coverly-D.Friedgood
British Over-65 Ch., Torquay 2019
Modern Defence

1 e4 g6 2 d4 ♗g7 3 ♘c3 d6 4 ♗e3 a6 5 f4 b5 6 a3?!

Too meek, if a common mistake at club level. 6 ♗d3 ♘d7 7 ♘f3 ♗b7 8 e5 is the complex main line.

6...♗b7 7 ♘f3 ♘d7 8 ♗d3 ♘gf6

Black might also hit back with 8...c5! when 9 d5 ♘gf6 10 h3 0-0 followed by ...e6 leaves White looking rather overextended.

9 e5 ♘d5 10 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 11 0-0 0-0 12 b3?

This achieves little. The immediate 12 c3 was preferable or even 12 ♘g5!?, angling for 12...c5? 13 dxc5 dxe5 14 ♗xg6 (or 14 f5) 14...hxg6 15 ♕xd5.

12...c5 13 c3 cxd4 14 cxd4 ♕b6

Targeting the weakness on b3 with 14...♖c8 15 a4 ♖c3 was also promising.

15 ♗f2 ♖ac8 16 f5?

The wrong flank, although it's not easy in advance to deduce that 16 a4!? ♖c3 17 axb5 axb5 18 ♕e2 ♖xb3 19 ♖fb1 ♖xb1+ 20 ♖xb1 enables White to regain his pawn after 20...b4 (20...♖a8! 21 ♗xb5 ♘f8 maintains an edge for Black; White is overextended) 21 ♗c4.

16...♕c6 17 ♗h4 dxe5!

Exploding the centre and here achieving Black's main goal in the Modern quickly leads to victory.

18 fxg6 fxg6 19 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 20 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 21 ♖c1 ♕b6 22 ♗xe7 ♕xd4+ 0-1

Solutions

to Find the Winning Moves (pages 37-39)

1) Katz-Nyzhnyk
1...♖d8! 0-1 If 2 ♖xe7 ♖d1#.

2) Grischuk-Yu Yangyi
1 e7! 1-0 1...♔xe7 2 h7 will force a new queen, as would have 1 h7 ♔g7 2 e7 ♘f6 3 ♘h5+!.

3) Davies-Han
1...♖xc4! 0-1 The b-pawn will queen after 2 bxc4 b3.

4) Gogia-Nayak
If the position looks familiar, it might be because it arose from the same line of the Lopez as Frank Poole against *HAL 9000* from *2001: A Space Odyssey*: **1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 ♕e2 b5 6 ♗b3 ♗e7 7 c3 0-0 8 0-0 d5 9 exd5 ♘xd5 10 ♘xe5 ♘f4 11 ♕e4 ♘xe5 12 ♕xa8? ♕d3 13 ♕a7** (reaching the puzzle position; 13 ♗d1 ♗h3 14 ♕xa6 ♗xg2 15 ♖e1 ♕f3 0-1 was Kubrick's famous game) **13...♘f3+! 0-1** After 13...♘f3+ (13...♘h3+! 14 gxh3 ♘f3+ 15 ♔g2 ♘h4+ also does the trick) White is mated on the back rank or with 14 gxf3 ♕g6+ 15 ♔h1 ♕g2#.

5) Yu Yangyi-Gujrathi
1 ♖xh6+! 1-0 After 1 ♖xh6+ (or 1 ♕xe5 ♔g8 2 ♖xh6!) 1...gxh6 2 ♕xe5+ Black either loses a ruinous amount of material or is mated by 2...♔g8 3 ♘xh6#.

6) Derakhshani-Pigott
1...♗e6! 0-1 Only now did it dawn on the poor British Under-18 Champion that 2 ♘xe6 c6 wins a piece.

(7) Crouch-Gilbert
1...♕g3! 2 ♘e4 (this is hopeless, but if 2 ♖c4 ♖hg8 when there's no good way to defend g2) **2...♕xh4 3 ♗xh8 fxe4 0-1**

8) Lie-Risting
1 ♗xb7! ♔xb7 2 ♖ab1+ ♔a6 (2...♔c6 3 ♕e4+ ♔d7 4 ♖b7 wins the black queen after all) **3 ♕e6+ 1-0** 3...♔a5 4 ♕b3 ♕d7 5 c4! will finish off the hapless king.

9) Hillarp Persson-Blomqvist
1 ♘c6+! 1-0 1...♔e8 2 ♖d2 wins a piece, in view of 2...♗c5 3 ♗h5+.

10) Krzyzanowski-Rudd
1...♗e4! 0-1 The most clinical choice (1...♕h4+ 2 ♔g1 ♖f8 also does the business), forcing mate. White is out of useful checks after 2 ♖xg7+ (if 2 ♕h3 ♕e1# or 2 ♗xe4 ♕h2#) 2...♔xg7 3 ♕c7+ ♔g8 4 ♕xd8+ ♘f8.

11) Khanin-Paravyan
In the game White failed to lose a tempo: **1 ♗a4?** (now White cannot win both pawns for his bishop; instead, 1 ♗c2! ♔d2 2 ♗a4 ♘a2 3 ♔b5 would have drawn, and if 3...♘c3+ 4 ♔xa5 ♘xa4 5 ♔xb4) **1...♔d2 2 ♔b5 b3 0-1**

12) Cowan-Pattni
White has just found the ingenious defence ♘f3-h4, but after **1...♖xf1+ 2 ♖xf1** and then the calm **2...♔h7!** Black would have won. Instead, 2...♕xh4? 3 ♖f8+ ♔h7 4 ♕g8+ ♔g6 5 ♕f7+ saw White able to repeat moves before the game concluded with a remarkable tragi-comedy: 5...♔g5?? 6 ♘f3# 1-0.

13) Nestorovic-Ernst
1...c3! (now there's no way to defend f3) **2 ♘xc3 ♕xf3+ 3 ♔e1 ♗xc3+ 4 bxc3 ♕xe4+ 0-1**

14) Zufic-Grant
1 ♕xb4! (much, much stronger than 1 ♘c3, although 1 ♘f6+ ♗xf6 2 ♕xb4! also works) **1...♖xb4** (now mate will occur on h8, but otherwise Black would have been a piece down) **2 ♖d8+ ♔h7 3 ♘f6+ ♗xf6 4 ♗xf6 1-0**

15) Goodwin-De Coverly
1 ♔f6! ♔e8 (now the e-pawn falls with an easy draw for White, but after 1...♔g8 2 ♖a8+ ♔h7 3 ♖a7+ ♔h6 4 ♖a8 Black must return with the king to avert mate) **2 ♖e7+ ♔d8 3 ♖xe3 d4 4 ♖f3 d3 5 ♔xf5 ♔e7 ½-½**

16) Gorodetzky-Moiseenko
1 c6! ♔e6 (1...bxc6 2 ♔c5 is the first important point, and if 2...cxb5 3 d5 followed by b7) **2 ♔c5 g5 3 d5+!** (the second key point) **3...♗xd5 4 c7 ♔d7 5 ♔xd5 h5 6 ♔e5 g4 7 ♔f4 1-0**

17) Duda-Mamedyarov
1...♘xf4+ 2 exf4 (2 ♔f1 is no improvement, in view of 2...♘xe2 3 ♔xe2 ♕f3+ 4 ♔e1 ♖d3!, and if 5 ♘xd3 ♕xe3+ 6 ♔d1 exd3) **2...e3+ 3 ♗f3 ♗xf3+ 4 ♔xf3 exf2 0-1**

18) Kostecka-Nazarova
1...♕e1+! (to win Black must be aware of stalemate resources; the game ended 1...fxg2? 2 ♕e4+ ♕f4 3 ♕e1+ ♕g3 4 ♕e4+ ♔xh3 5 ♕h4+! ♕xh4 ½-½) **2 ♔h2 g4!** would have threatened mate and won after 3 hxg4 ♕e2 or 3 gxf3 ♕g3+ 4 ♔h1 ♔xh3 5 ♕d2 gxf3 6 ♕d7+ ♕g4 7 ♕g7 ♕g2+ 8 ♕xg2+ fxg2+ 9 ♔g1 h4.

19) Holland-Rocco
1...♘xf2! (or 1...♘xd3 2 ♖xd3 ♘xf2!, transposing after 3 ♔xf2 ♕h4+ 4 ♔g1, while 4 g3 runs into 4...♕f6+ 5 ♔g2 dxc4 6 ♕xc4 cxb2) **2 ♔xf2 ♕h4+ 3 ♔g1** (3 g3 ♕xh3 gives Black a crushing attack, as shown by 4 ♕xc3 ♕h2+ 5 ♔f1 ♘f3 6 ♕c2 e5) **3...♘xd3 4 ♖xd3?** (4 ♕xc3 dxc4 5 ♘f4 was the last chance) **4...dxc4 0-1**

20) Clarke-Willmoth
Black ingeniously saved himself in the game: **1 ♖xg1+! hxg1♕ 2 ♕g8+ ♔f3! 3 ♕xg1 ½-½** However, White could have side-stepped the stalemate defence with 1 ♕g8+! ♔f3 2 ♕xg1! hxg1♕ 3 ♖xg1, as pointed out by Connor Clarke, and if 3...♔f2 4 ♖g8 f3 (or 4...♔f3 5 ♖g7 ♔f2 6 ♔e4) 5 ♔d2! ♔f1 6 ♔e3 f2 7 ♖f8 with a trivial win.

21) Iljiushenok-Fedoseev
1 ♘b5! (1 ♕f6 ♘d7! isn't so clear) **1...♕c6** (1...axb5 2 ♗xb5+ ♘d7 3 ♗b6 wins, and if 3...♕xe5 4 ♖ae1 ♕f4 5 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 6 ♕e2 when Black's king is too exposed and he loses his queen for starters after 6...♕e4 7 ♕b5+ ♕c6 8 ♖d1+ ♗d6 9 ♖xd6+! ♔xd6 10 ♖d1+) **2 ♕f6 ♖g8** (and not 2...♘d7? 3 ♕xh8 ♕xc4 4 ♘d6+) **3 ♗d5! 1-0** Black loses material in view of 3...exd5 4 ♕xc6+ and 3...♕xd5 4 ♘c7+.

22) Inarkiev-Gujrathi
1...♘xb2! 2 ♗a6 (2 ♔xb2 ♗xb4 is crushing, in view of 3 ♔a1 ♗c3+ 4 ♘xc3 ♖xc3 5 ♖b1 ♕e7 or 3 ♖b1 ♗e1+ 4 ♔a1 ♕xb1+ 5 ♖xb1 ♗xg3) **2...♕xa6 3 ♔xb2 ♕e2** (now the defence collapses) **4 ♔b1 ♖xc2 5 ♕f2 ♖b2+ 0–1**

23) Van Foreest-L'Ami
Play concluded: **1...f5?** (of course, White queens and wins after 1...g1♕? 2 ♕xg1 ♘xg1 3 b6) **2 ♕e3+ ♔g4 3 ♕e2+ ♔g3 4 ♕xe5+ f4 5 ♕g7+ ♔h2 6 b6** (White is too quick) **6...f3 7 b7 f2 8 b8♕+ ♔h1 9 ♕xg2+ ♔xg2 10 ♕b7+ ♔g1 11 ♕g7+ ♔f1 12 ♔e3 ♔e1 13 ♕a1# 1-0**

However, as pointed out by Justin Tan in his excellent ChessPublishing column on the Caro-Kann, Pirc and Scandinavian, 1...♔g4! would have drawn: 2 ♔d3! (2 ♔d1! is also OK for White; but not 2 ♕e3? g1♕ 3 ♕xg1+ ♘xg1 4 b6 ♘f3+ 5 ♔e3 ♘d4 and the knight makes it back in time to halt the pawn) 2...f5 3 ♕g6+ ♘g5 4 ♕b6 ♘h3 5 ♔c4 f4 and it's high time that White forced the repetition.

24) Mamedyarov-Aronian
After **1...♖c2? 2 ♔g2 ♖dd2 3 ♕xf6 a4 4 ♔h3 ♖xf2** White could have secured sufficient counterplay with 5 ♕e7. Instead, 1...♖8d3! 2 ♕g4 (or 2 ♕h5 a4 3 ♔g2 a3 4 ♕xf7 b5 5 ♕xe6+ ♔b7 when Black's pawns are too powerful) 2...♖c3 would have won: for example, 3 ♔g2 (3 ♔e1 ♖cc2 leaves White too tied up) 3...♖c1 4 ♖xb2 ♖xb2 5 ♕g8+ ♔c7 6 ♕xf7+ ♔b6 7 ♕xf6 ♖cc2 and the queenside pawns will decide.

This Month's New Releases

A Sicilian Stunner – The Kalashnikov
Nick Pert, running time: 5 hours
ChessBase PC-DVD
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Another month, another Sicilian. I must admit, when my friend and I first heard someone say 'Sicilian Kalashnikov' back in the early 1990s, we assumed they were making a joke version of the name 'Sveshnikov' and my friend even went out of his way to correct what he had assumed was a humorous misnomer. Little did we know that it really was an authentic member of the Sicilian family, but information travelled much more slowly back in the pre-internet days.

The Kalashnikov has yet to reach the degree of popularity enjoyed by the Sveshnikov, perhaps because it allows White to play an early c4, due to Black delaying the move ...♘f6. It is worth stressing the difference in the specific move orders. The Kalashnikov starts thus: 1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 e5 5 ♘b5 d6; whereas the Sveshnikov uses an extra knight move by both sides: 1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 e5 6 ♘b5 d6, when c2-c4 is obviously not possible.

Presenter Nick Pert is keen to stress the advantage of choosing the lesser popular of the two: "The Kalashnikov is a favourite weapon of mine in the main line of the Sicilian Defence. It is closely related to the Sveshnikov, but with much less theory to learn."

When a reigning world champion makes a variation his top choice it is natural to see many others follow suit. Since Carlsen's adoption of the Sveshnikov, the theory gap between that and the Kalashnikov is likely to remain for some time, which makes the latter a potentially easier option for club and tournament players to utilise. Furthermore, it offers the appealing promise of aggression to the second player.

Nick Pert notes that "Many of the ideas are thematic and Black can achieve attacking positions in several of the variations. The lines have all been thoroughly checked and will hopefully provide the viewer with the confidence to play this opening." He is a good presenter, sticking admirably to the point throughout the video lectures, although that is not to say there is no time for humour; he freely admits he was initially drawn to the Kalashnikov by its "cool name".

The coverage starts with the sidelines on move five and six, such as 5 ♘f5, 6 ♗g5 and several others before hitting the main lines of 6 ♘1c3 and 6 c4. Then there is coverage of a couple of earlier oddities – namely 2 ♘c3 followed by either 3 ♘ge2 or 3 ♘f3 – before 15 test positions and a training option bring the disc to a close.

It makes good sense to carefully examine the lines starting with **1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 e5 5 ♘b5 d6** and then **6 c4**, which see White trying to exploit the main difference between this line and the Sveshnikov by setting up the infamous Maroczy Bind. The pawns on e4 and c4 can lead to a slow strangulation and some players would be naturally suspicious about the backward d-pawn. However, the defence is nothing if not dynamic and Pert shows ways in which Black can achieve the almost unthinkable by breaking out with ...d6-d5. Naturally, it does require a favourable breeze of tactics.

This position looks like a formidable Maroczy Bind, but Black can now play **16...d5!**, exploiting the undefended state of the knight on a3, and if **17 exd5 ♗xa3 18 dxe6 ♖xe6 19 ♖cd1 ♕e7** with equal chances.

The layout and selection of material are both nicely judged. There are model games, a full repertoire for Black and a series of interactive questions to test viewers' knowledge of the material. The Kalashnikov may be a suitable new weapon to hone between seasons and this DVD would be a very good source of material on which to start.

Sean Marsh

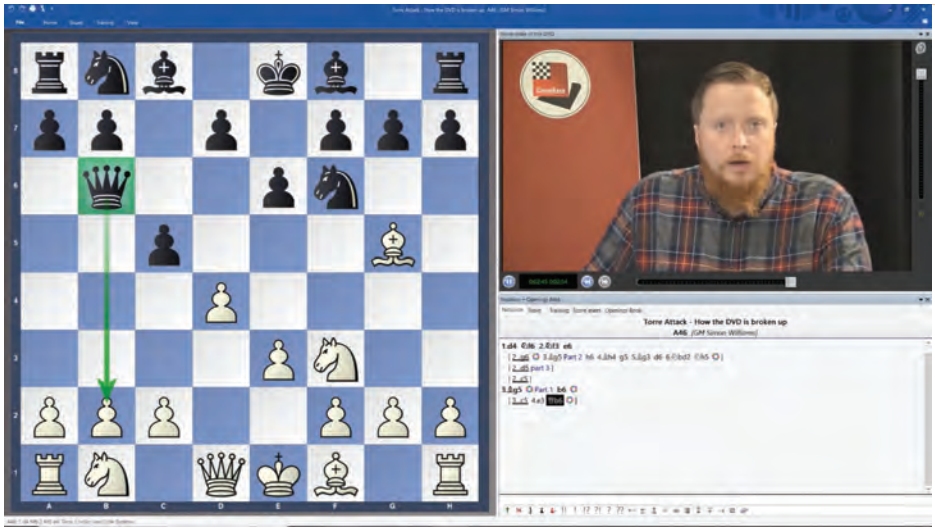
The Torre Attack
Simon Williams, running time: 7 hours
ChessBase PC-DVD
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

The self-styled 'Ginger GM' is back, with two new DVDs for ChessBase. This time he turns his attention away from main lines featuring the earliest possible aggression and offers instead coverage of the Colle System and the Torre Attack. This review will focus on the latter, while noting that the Colle and Torre make ideal partners for a 1 d4 repertoire if White doesn't want to address the main lines after 2 c4. Even here, theory has been expanding and it is quaint to see on the DVD cover the standard hook, "This opening is perfect for players who do not have unlimited time to memorise hours and hours of theory", alongside a run time of seven hours (and five hours for the Colle System).

The seven hours are entertaining though; Williams is a presenter with an easy style, backed up by plenty of experience. The blurb has it right when it announces: "In this DVD, GM Simon Williams shows you how to play this opening in an aggressive yet simple way" by "Concentrating on learning being fun yet effective."

The Torre Attack aims to turn 1 d4, 2 ♘f3 and 3 ♗g5 into a potent weapon and one in which opponents may find themselves treading unfamiliar paths. Theoretically, Black should have no problems (otherwise it would be seen much more often at the higher levels), but at club level the Torre can indeed pack a punch, especially as most opponents will have spent most of their limited anti-1 d4 study time over the last few years trying to fathom a way to keep winning chances on the board against the amazingly popular London System. Having the energy to push the bishop one square further than f4 can definitely bring rewards.

Some players prefer to use the Colle against ...e6 and/or ...d5 options by Black, others use the Torre only against 1...♘f6 and 2...g6. Williams offers good suggestions against 1...♘f6 and 2...e6 in addition to the King's Indian Defence approach, but in the last of the 20 lectures he acknowledges that 1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♗g5 ♘e4 is very comfortable for Black and one of the lines in which the Torre is just not effective. At such times, Williams is honest about the problem and recommends playing an early c2-c4 instead, abandoning the 'd4 system' approach



or even 3 ♗f4, with a London System.

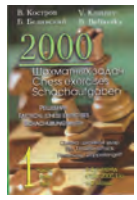
However, the Torre contains plenty of bite throughout the other video lectures. Needless to say, Williams is generally in favour of an aggressive approach, complete with hyperactive h-pawns. This gives him plenty of opportunity to call the pawn 'Harry', a conceit which is wearing more than a little thin (I never even liked Rowson's 'Delroy', which is where this trend for anthropomorphism started).

Nomenclature aside, I was taken by the idea of White exchanging the Torre bishop for the knight on f6 without being prompted by ...h6. The point is that Black could eventually choose a good moment to play either ...♘d5 or ...♘h5, initiating comforting exchanges of his own. This looks like a fresh and energising idea, which had hitherto escaped my attention. There must be psychological barriers standing in the way of the voluntary, impromptu capture by the Torre bishop, which means the idea could come as a big surprise to the opponent.

In fact I was surprised to see how widespread such a capture is in the Torre, even in standard positions. Here, for instance, Black may think equality is on the way after the natural **9...e5**, but could be in for a big disappointment, due to **10 dxe5 ♘xe5 11 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 12 f4** and now **12...♗d6** (maintaining options of breaking the pin with ...♗e7) runs into **13 e4 dxe4? 14 ♗xf6!**, which forces the undesirable **14...gxf6**, as **14...♕xf6? 15 ♘xe4 ♕e7 16 ♘xd6 ♕xd6? 17 ♗xh7+!** is clearly intolerable.

There is a lot of material here and seven hours is certainly not a trivial time investment, but the Torre Attack would make a useful addition to any white repertoire, albeit not necessarily as the main choice.

Sean Marsh



2000 Chess Exercises
Part 1: Pin, Double Attack
Vsevolod Kostrov & Alexander Beliavsky, 112 pages, paperback
RRP £10.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £9.85**

Leading coach Kostrov has teamed up with a famous player to present an exercise book containing a great number of positions relevant to just two themes: pin and double attack. As such, the diligent reader will certainly find their grasp of some key tactical motifs much improved and we should also note that the work is mainly aimed at 1700-2000-rated players.

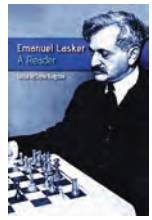
Also recently released from Russian Chess House and by the same authors are *2000 Chess Exercises Part 2: Diversion, Decoy*, *2000 Chess Exercises Part 3: Chess Combinations* and *2000 Chess Exercises Part 4: Chess Endings*. They're each available from Chess & Bridge for £10.95 (Subscribers – £9.85), of if you want all four volumes together, so some 8,000(!) positions, that is possible too for the special price of £40.00 or just £36.00 for Subscribers.

600 Combinations
Maksim Blokh, 96 pages, paperback
RRP £11.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £10.75**

This is another new work from Russian Chess House designed to improve combinational vision and serve as a textbook. Once more a great amount of material has been packed into a fairly short space and fans of solving tactics will again enjoy a field day.

A Complete Guide to Defending Against 1 d4
Chris Ward & John Emms, 354 pages, paperback
RRP £17.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £16.19**

It's been a number of years since GMs John Emms and Chris Ward shared a flat, but that hasn't prevented Everyman Chess from packaging together two of their works for their latest companion volume, which includes both *Starting Out: The Nimzo-Indian* and *Starting Out: The Queen's Indian*..



Emanuel Lasker: A Reader*
Taylor Kingston (ed.), 400 pages, paperback
RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

Only last month we brought you Sean Marsh's thoughts on *Emanuel Lasker: Volume 1* by Forster, Negele and Tischbierek and now we have a second new work on Lasker thanks to Russell Enterprises. American chess historical expert Kingston has worked his way through the great volume of Lasker's writings and here presents some of the highlights, such as a tribute to Pillsbury, as well as coverage of his 1907 and 1908 world championship matches.

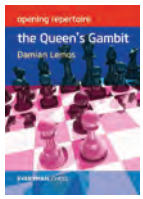
First Steps: The King's Indian Defence
Andrew Martin, 336 pages, paperback
RRP £17.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £16.19**

Andrew Martin is not only a popular presenter and highly experienced coach, but has also been a lifelong fan of the King's Indian. The opening does, of course, contain some very theoretical lines, but Martin's job is to map out the essential theory while highlighting the key strategical and tactical ideas for both sides, enabling even a fairly inexperienced club player to be able to take up the opening.

Monster Your Middlegame Planning: Volume 2
Efstratios Grivas, 280 pages, paperback
RRP £24.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.45**

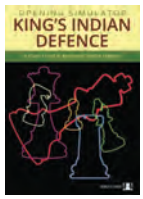
Exercise works have certainly been dominating the market of late. Here Grivas continues trying to improve the strategic thinking and planning ability of those in the 1500-2200 range, presenting several hundred positions in which the reader is offered a choice of plans to chose from.

If you're yet to purchase *Monster Your Middlegame Planning: Volume* 1 from Chess & Bridge and would like that too, both volumes are available together for the special price of £45 or just £40.50 for Subscribers.



Opening Repertoire: The Queen's Gambit
Damian Lemos, 252 pages, paperback
RRP £18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

It's not just Thinkers Publishing, but also Everyman Chess who must have had a busy start to the summer. Argentinean Grandmaster Lemos maps out a repertoire for White with 1 d4 d5 2 c4, meeting the QGD and the Slav with their respective Exchange variations and the QGA with 3 e4. Overall, the repertoire is grounded in clear-cut positional ideas, while presenting a theoretical challenge to Black and not lacking in bite.



Opening Simulator: King's Indian Defence
Esbend Lund & Andreas Skytte Hagen,
272 pages, paperback
RRP £22.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.65**

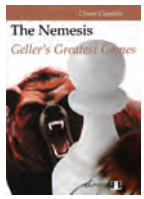
A new series from Quality Chess sees the Danish IM author team begin by explaining the main lines and ideas of the King's Indian, which does mean cramming quite a lot of important lines into just 80-odd pages. The bulk of the work is then devoted to 400 test positions, which have been specially designed to both help with calculation and improve the reader's grasp of the most important motifs in the King's Indian. As with most Quality Chess paperbacks, please add £4 to your order with Chess & Bridge if you would prefer *Opening Simulator: King's Indian Defence* in hardback form.

Queen's Indian Defence: The Modern Approach
Sergei Tiviakov, PC-DVD;
running time: 9 hours
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

It's been 8 years since the acclaimed first volume of *No Fear of 1.d4!* appeared. Now Tiviakov has returned to the ChessBase studio to update his earlier coverage of the Queen's Indian for Black. Once again he presents the key concepts in clear fashion, while presenting plenty of theory, not least on demonstrating how Black can solidly counter 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 g3 with both 4...♗b4+ and 4...♗b7 5 ♗g2 ♗e7.

The Modern Scotch
Alexander Khalifman & Sergei Soloviov,
524 pages, paperback
RRP £19.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.99**

Chess Stars have done well to attract no less a theoretician than Alexander Khalifman and their latest repertoire work advocates 1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♘xd4, which can, of course, quickly lead to some rather unbalanced positions. The step-by-step approach will help the club player reader, but it should be said that this work contains a great amount of theory, much of it quite cutting-edge.



The Nemesis: Geller's Greatest Games
Efim Geller, 480 pages, hardback
RRP £26.50 **SUBSCRIBERS £23.85**

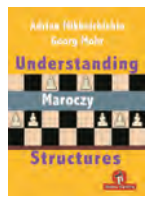
This work is only available in hardback from Quality Chess, a fitting tribute to the legendary Soviet GM Efim Geller (1925-1998). Geller deserves to be known as 'The Nemesis' due to his plus scores over such illuminaries as Mikhail Botvinnik and Bobby Fischer. En route to winning two USSR Championships and seven Olympiad team golds he played a number of deeply impressive games. As one would expect from someone who trained Anatoly Karpov, Geller produced many a positional masterpiece, although he could also play quite dynamically at times, as shown by his profound understanding of both the King's Indian and Sicilian. Geller was also an excellent annotator, so kudos to Quality for commissioning this translation meaning that English-speaking readers can enjoy 135 of his best games along with his own notes.

The King's Indian According to Tigran Petrosian*
Igor Yanvarjov, 424 pages, paperback
RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

Russell Enterprises deserve praise for wearing their creative hat of late. Here 300 of Petrosian's games in the King's Indian – from both sides of the board – are well annotated. Unsurprisingly this cannot fail to improve the reader's understanding of the King's Indian, as well as their strategic play, but the main feature which many may take away is an appreciation of just how rich and creative Petrosian's play often was.

The Royal Chess Couple in Action
Hans Bohm & Yochanan Afek,
384 pages, paperback
RRP £30.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £27.85**

The concept behind this work is an unusual but fairly grand one: 240 positions are presented in which either the king or the queen plays an important offensive or defensive role. Readers can, of course, use each position to test their tactical skills and creativity or they may just enjoy playing through the well-explained explanations to some quite remarkable positions. Throughout publishers Thinkers have made use of a number of photographs of some of the players and composers whose work features within.



Understanding Maroczy Structures
Adrian Mikhalchishin & Georg Mohr,
296 pages, paperback
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

If you deploy a Maroczy Bind fairly often as White or look forward to seeing one when wheeling out the Accelerated Dragon or Hedgehog, this new work from Thinkers Publishing should help to improve your knowledge of this famous structure. The experienced authors present a number of highly instructive Marozcy battles, grouped by theme, if with the occasional interesting diversion as when 1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 g6 5 c4 ♗h6!? is discussed.

** - If interested in purchasing a copy of this work, please be aware that stock is limited, so do contact Chess & Bridge (email info@chess.co.uk or call 0207 486 7015) in advance of placing your order.*

Saunders on Chess

Follow me on Twitter: @johnchess or email: johns@chess.co.uk

Imagine if Geoff Boycott did chess commentary... "I were watchin' last round o' British Championship in Torquay, and I couldn't believe my eyes – or ears. Young Aussie Grandmaster Justin Tan were int' studio and when they showed 'im what 'e missed against Simon Williams, he said summat like: 'Yeah I saw that, but couldn't be bothered to calculate it.' Then Simon Williams piped up with how tired everyone were, havin' to play int' mornin' and so on. Would ya credit it! Yooung players these days – they don't know they've bin born! HE Atkins or Jonathan Penrose would 'ave got their 'eads down, worked through t' variations and found the win. I don't know woss goin' off out there!"

Well, Boycott would have said something like that, wouldn't he? (I realise readers from non-cricket-playing countries will think I've gone slightly off my head at this point – just to explain, Geoff Boycott is a famously splenetic cricket commentator who regularly lambasts modern-day cricketers in a broad Yorkshire accent on TV and radio.) But some of those last-round games did beggar belief. Daniel Fernandez, after achieving a grotesquely lost position in ten moves in the penultimate round, promptly did so again in the last round, though the game lasted a lot longer as he and Neil Bradbury exchanged errors.

It was wildly entertaining, but it did bring into question the notion that modern players are so much stronger than their predecessors. Are they? They know more opening theory (due to a massive increase in the quantity of reference material), and there are more good players around (due to the proliferation of events), but I'm far from convinced their overall standard of play is significantly higher than the very best guys playing fifty to a hundred years ago. If Alekhine borrowed Doctor Who's Tardis and arrived amongst us now, I reckon he would be playing 2600 chess from the off and graduate to 2700 or 2800 within a few months of assimilating all the new info at his fingertips.

That said, I'm not without empathy for the players. Last rounds always tend to be a bit mad, and always have done. It's perhaps surprising that no chess author has ever turned his quill to producing a tome devoted exclusively to last-round games and highlighting the insanity that often occurs as tournaments end. A lot of it is down to tiredness, but a whole load of other factors come into play. For those vying for top prizes or norms, the pressure can become intolerable, causing them to blow a gasket at the critical moment. For those at the other end of the table, the relentless suffering that brought them to this sorry state often leads to a swift zero as they focus on a quick exit from the scene of their humiliation.

Torquay - would Geoffrey Boycott enjoy staying at its most famous hotel, Fawlty Towers?

For those on middling boards, with only rating or honour to play for, the last round often has a psychology all its own. Has anyone else noticed how often last round opponents have a friendly pre-game chat? It might only be about the weather, or a question about how the tournament has gone for them, and could be nothing at all to do with the coming game. It's probably triggered by the imminent prospect of freedom from the rigours of the event, but there can also be an ulterior motive. It provides an opportunity to detect some inkling, verbal or otherwise, of how amenable the opponent might be to an early peace treaty, or whether they are going to be one of those 'death-or-glory' characters who want to end the event with blood on the board (even their own).

Players frequently chat before games, but I have this sense that it is more prevalent in the last round. Further to that, my feeling is that the player who initiates such a conversation is more likely to be the one who is keenest on an early draw, and who wants to ingratiate him or herself a bit, hoping that somehow the opponent will thus become less desirous of beating them. Too fanciful? Perhaps. Or is it just me who does that? That's also possible.

Much will depend on your own aspirations for the game in question. But let's say you are the 'drawmeister' in this equation (I find that mindset easier to imagine). You conclude from your pre-game natter that your opponent is an affable cove who might well be amenable to a quickie draw. That's fine if a half-point is the height of your ambition, but the danger then is that you play a little too quickly or casually, leading to an early debacle, or perhaps find yourself in a rotten endgame position, when the opponent previously diagnosed as affable will be only too pleased to show you the other side of his personality (one that is common to all of us chessboard psychopaths), and grind you into the dust.

Let's say you detect a different set of signals from your opponent in response to your conversational opening gambit. He's a bit monosyllabic, maybe, or aloof, or looks unsmilingly at your feeble attempts to ingratiate yourself. Everything tells you this opponent won't be interested in your early peace offer. Is this bad news? Paradoxically, I would suggest not. OK, you're not going to be getting the early train home because this guy is going to put you through your paces, but being forced to do a bit of work is usually good for your chess. The pre-game chat might have been a bit frosty, but it may already have established that it's your opponent who is going to be making the running, so the pressure's on him.

This little bit of pre-game intelligence can then be exploited to prepare yourself mentally for the coming struggle, dismiss the notion of an early draw and knuckle down to some normal chess. I confess I have zero statistical evidence for my coming assertion, and it's important to bear in mind that last-round fiascos come in all shapes and sizes, but my feeling is that players who strain to 'go for it' in last-round games are rather less likely to succeed than those who stick to their normal game plan.

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SIMON WILLIAMS: THE LONDON SYSTEM WITH 2.Bf4 RELOADED

Over the last couple of years nearly all the world's elite grandmasters have been employing the London System, and on this DVD Simon Williams shows what we can learn from their practice. The "Ginger GM" takes a look at all the latest developments whilst teaching you all the basics that you need to know in order to play this opening with success. Following his first bestseller on the London System, Williams' new work not only updates previous analyses but is also packed with new and original ideas which can be used even at the highest level. If you're not a practitioner of the London System yet, in fact the only question remains: "Why Not?"

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£26.95

NICHOLAS PERT: A SICILIAN STUNNER – THE KALASHNIKOV

The Kalashnikov is closely related to the Sveshnikov but with much less theory to learn. This increasingly popular opening is easy to pick up as the Black pieces can usually be developed quickly and smoothly. The starting position for this video series is 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 e5. Pert: "When I was looking for a Sicilian variation to play, this one ticked all of the boxes. Many of the ideas are thematic and Black can achieve attacking positions in several of the variations. The lines have all been thoroughly checked and will hopefully provide the viewer with the confidence to play this opening."

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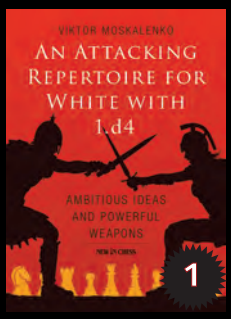

1: An Attacking Repertoire for White with 1.d4
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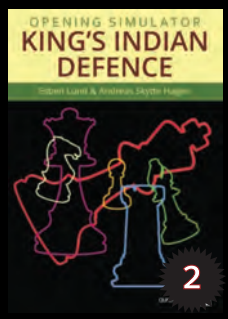

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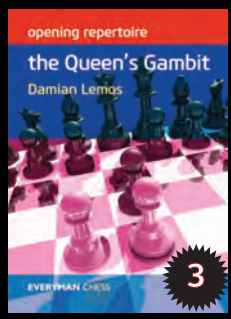

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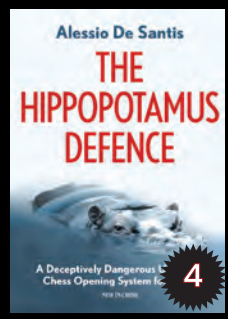

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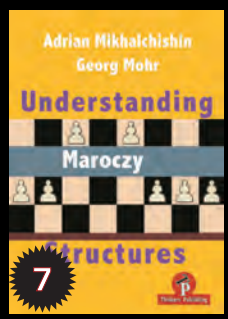

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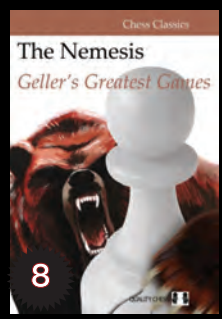

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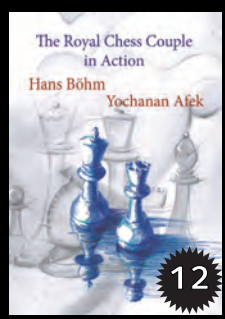

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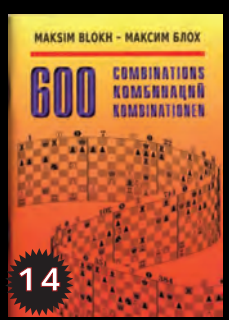

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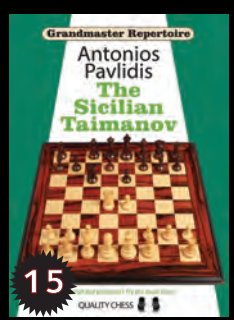

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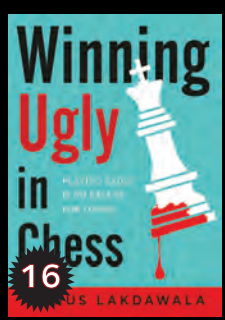

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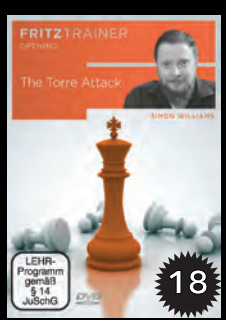

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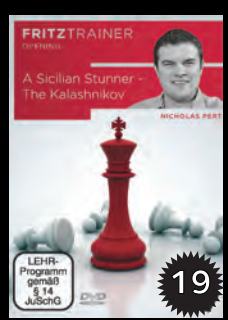

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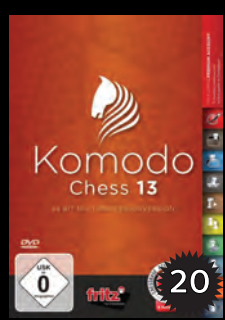

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